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CONGRESS PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESSES

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

This is an attempt to bring up-to-date the collection of the Congress Presidential Addresses which the Publishers issued several years ago. In response to a growing demand the Publishers have much pleasure in issuing in two handy volumes the full text Addresses of the Presidents of the Indian National Congress from its inception to the present day. The Second Series which is now published contains the Presidential Addresses from the year 1911 onwards. The First Series will shortly follow. As these volumes are likely to serve as authentic books of reference, advantage has been taken of the issue of these two volumes to supply a comprehensive and exhaustive index to each volume.

G. A. NATESAN & CO.

Dec. 1934.

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Session.	Year.	Place.	President.
1	1885	Bombay	Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee
2	1886	Calcutta	„ Dadabhai Naoroji
3	1887	Madras	„ Budruddin Tyabji
4	1888	Allahabad	„ George Yule
5	1889	Bombay	Sir William Wedderburn
6	1890	Calcutta	Mr. P. M. Mehta
7	1891	Nagpur	„ P. Ananda Charlu
8	1892	Allahabad	„ W. C. Bonnerjee
9	1893	Lahore	„ Dadabhai Naoroji
10	1894	Madras	„ Alfred Webb
11	1895	Poona	„ Surendra Nath Bannerjee
12	1896	Calcutta	„ Rahimatullah Sayani
13	1897	Amraoti	„ C. Sankaran Nair
14	1898	Madras	„ A. M. Bose
15	1899	Lucknow	„ R. C. Dutt
16	1900	Lahore	„ N. G. Chandavarkar
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18	1902	Ahmedabad	„ Surendra Nath Bannerjee
19	1903	Madras	„ Lal Mohan Ghose
20	1904	Bombay	Sir Henry Cotton
21	1905	Benares	Mr. G. K. Gokhale
22	1906	Calcutta	„ Dadabhai Naoroji
23	1907	Surat	Dr. Rash Behary Ghose
23	1908	Madras	„ Rash Behary Ghose
24	1909	Lahore	Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya
25	1910	Allahabad	Sir William Wedderburn
26	1911	Calcutta	Pandit Bishan Narayan Dhar
27	1912	Bankipore	Rao Bahadur R. N. Mudholkar
28	1913	Karachi	Hon. Nawab Syed Mohammed
29	1914	Madras	„ Babu Bhupendranath Basu
30	1915	Bombay	„ Sir Satyendra Prasanna Sinha
31	1916	Lucknow	„ Ambika Charan Mazumdar
32	1917	Calcutta	Mrs. Annie Besant
33	1918	Delhi	Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya
34	1919	Amritsar	Pandit Motilal Nehru
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48	1934	Bombay	Babu Rajendra Prasad

NOTE

Orders are being registered for the First Series of the Congress Presidential Addresses (1885 to 1910) which will shortly be ready. Those who desire to obtain the First Series (Rupees Four) are requested to post the enclosed form duly filled. Mention if you are a subscriber to the "Indian Review" as it entitles you to a concession rate.

G. A. NATESAN & CO.

Publishers.

CONGRESS PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESSES

Twenty-sixth Congress—Calcutta—1911

PANDIT BISHAN NARAYAN DHAR

BROTHER-Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I thank you most sincerely for the signal honour you have conferred upon me by electing me as your President. The presidency of the National Congress, it has been rightly observed, is the highest honour which it is within your power to bestow upon any of your countrymen. In my case it is also unprecedented, because your generosity has conferred it upon one who is not a prominent figure in the public life of the country and is not known to fame, who has, by a chronic illness, been disabled from taking any active part in the great work in which you are engaged and has been living in the solitude of the Himalayan hills for the last six years—watching, no doubt, with deep interest, your noble and patriotic struggle, but unfit to take part in the fray. To me, therefore, the high office which by your generous suffrage I have been called upon to fill is not only a matter of the highest personal gratification, but it is more; for I take it as an honour conferred upon the province to which I belong. I believe I am expressing the unanimous sentiment of this assembly when I say how happy would we all have been to-day to have Mr. Ramsay MacDonald as our President, had not a most cruel bereavement prevented him from fulfilling the engagement he had so kindly made with you. The untimely death of Mrs. MacDonald, an irreparable loss to him, has

saddened us all; for we know how, like her distinguished husband, she was deeply interested in everything that concerned the welfare of India, and her chapters on the position of Indian women in her husband's remarkable book on "The Awakening of India" give some indication of her keen womanly insight into the life of her Indian sisters and her touching sympathy with their lot. I beg to offer Mr. MacDonald, on your behalf and on mine, our deepest and sincerest sympathies in the sad and cruel bereavement that has made his hearth desolate. Gentlemen, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald is one of that band of noble-minded and philanthropic Englishmen whose liberal sympathies and humanitarian sentiments are not bounded by race or clime, who love justice and hate wrong as much in India as in their own country and to whose silent and unobtrusive but active and sleepless moral influence, we Indians owe many blessings which are never recorded in Government documents. Mr. MacDonald's interest in Indian questions has always been keen, intelligent and sympathetic, as even his Anglo-Indian detractors admit; and to such prejudiced presentation of the Indian case as is supplied by Mr. Chirol's book on the "Indian Unrest", there is no better antidote, in my opinion, than "The Awakening of India". He is one of the leaders of British democracy, which in the last resort is the arbiter of our destinies, and it is a source of inward strength and hope to us all that he and several of his able colleagues are so sympathetically and generously disposed towards India and are always so prompt in pleading on our behalf before their nation and their Parliament. Freaks of fortune are proverbial; and I assure you that nobody was more astonished than myself that in the unavoidable absence of such an able, experienced and influential English politician, I should have been called upon to preside over the deliberations of this great national assembly. The honour, as I have already said, is great, but the duty which it imposes upon me is equally great. If I had relied upon my own ability and experience, I should never have dared to accept it; but trusting to the help and guidance of the merciful Providence and to your prayer for the success of

the great work in which we all are engaged, I have come forward to obey your call.

INDIA'S LOSSES

Before I proceed any further, it is my sad duty to express our sincere grief for the heavy loss we have sustained this year by the disappearance from the stage of our public life of some of the best and most illustrious figures of our day. The sudden and permature death of the late Nizam of Hyderabad is justly mourned throughout the whole country, because he was one of those two or three Indian Princes whose names are heard in every Indian household and whose just and enlightened methods compare favourably, in some respects, even with those of the British Government. The late Nizam was a prince who knew no race or religious distinction in the work of government; his justice was equal as between Hindus and Mahomedans, his bounty was impartial to all. His remarkable letter to Lord Minto on the subject of 'sedition' contains principles of wise and generous statesmanship, not unworthy even of the best English statesmen who have ever ruled the Indian Empire.

By the death of Sir Charles Dilke, England has lost a staunch and sagacious liberal statesman of world-wide human sympathies, and India a wise, generous and true-hearted friend. We of the Congress can never forget his invaluable services to the cause of Indian economy and of equal justice for India. He was a tower of strength to us in Parliament, and would have come out to attend the Allahabad Congress last year, if he had not been prevented by the Parliamentary situation of the time. We mourn his loss, but his memory will always remain enshrined in our hearts.

From the field of Indian journalism and public life have passed away two most honoured and prominent figures—Babu Norendro Nath Sen and Babu Shishir Kumar Ghosh. Norendro Nath Sen was a remarkable personality in every way; and whether we approved or disapproved of his views upon any public question, we

always felt that we were in the presence of a man transparently honest, scrupulously just to the views of others, liberal to the poor, but hating gush and exaggeration—a man of immovable convictions and unquenchable faith in the future of his country.

Babu Shishir Kumar Ghosh is another great name in the same field. His activities perhaps were not so varied as those of Mr. Sen, and not quite so widely known in the remoter parts of India, but within the sphere to which he confined his energies, he wielded a potent influence, and the charm of his passionate religious faith was felt by a whole generation of the people of Bengal. The passing away of these two memorable figures from the arena of our public life is a national loss, but they have left behind them noble memories to inspire the hearts and guide the steps of the younger generation.

LORD HARDINGE AND THE CONGRESS

And now, Gentlemen, it is my most pleasant duty to refer to a happy incident in the life of the Congress, namely, the gracious reception by our Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, of the Congress deputation headed by Sir William Wedderburn in the beginning of last January. That act of kindness and grace was universally appreciated and applauded at the time and will always be gratefully remembered by the people.

THE ROYAL VISIT AND THE DURBAR

Gentlemen, my first duty as well as my proudest privilege as your President to-day is to tender on behalf of this great assembly and all those whom it represents, a most loyal and heart-felt homage and welcome to their most gracious Majesties King-Emperor George V and Queen-Empress Mary on their coming visit to this great city—the first city of their Eastern Empire. The visit of a British Sovereign to his great Eastern Dominion is a unique event in our history, and has sent a thrill of joy and gratitude through the length and breadth of this ancient land, but the memory of the acts of splendid beneficence that have marked that visit will never pass

away from the hearts of the Indian people. The great Coronation Durbar held at Delhi was a spectacle of unprecedented magnificence ; but the beneficence of the Sovereign was even greater ; for the boons he has conferred upon the whole country are worthy of one who wears the Crown of Victoria the Good, whose great Proclamation of 1858 is the charter of our liberties, and Edward the Peace-maker, whose royal messages of 1903 and 1908 are our most precious national possessions—one who as Prince of Wales, on a memorable occasion, struck the golden note of sympathy in England's dealings with India, and who as their King-Emperor, addressing the loyal Princes and faithful people of India at Delhi, assured them of his affection for them and said :—

I rejoice to have this opportunity of renewing in my own person those assurances which have been given you by my revered predecessors of the maintenance of your rights and privileges and of my earnest concern for your welfare, peace and contentment. May the Divine favour of Providence watch over my people and assist me in my utmost endeavour to promote their happiness and prosperity.

Gentlemen, these precious words have been immediately followed by unprecedented measures of beneficence and genuine regard for the welfare of the Indian people, which have touched their imagination and forged fresh bonds of affection between India and England, which no calamity can sever and no misfortune can dissolve.

ANNULMENT OF THE PARTITION

The Royal boons not only are a proof of British justice and benevolence ; they show that the old order is changing, giving place to something new and better, that the Supreme Government is determined to rule us according to its best and noblest traditions, and that if we appeal to it in a just cause and convince it by our persistent and patriotic endeavours that we are earnest and sincere, it will never fail to respond to our appeal. The greatest wound in the heart of India was the Partition of Bengal—a most unwise and unfortunate measure of a reactionary Viceroy—a measure which more than anything else contributed to the

general unrest of recent years, which inflicted a grievous wrong upon the Bengal race and helped to implant those feelings of racial and religious antagonism between Hindus and Mahomedans which we all deplore and which have given rise to some most unfortunate troubles in the administration of the country. The leaders of Bengal from the very beginning had warned the Government against the evils that were sure to follow in the track of that ill-starred measures but for years these warnings were addressed to deaf ears. Still they did not lose faith in the just instincts of their rulers and their faith has at last been justified. Lord Hardinge's Government, whose dispatch to the Secretary of State, dated the 25th August 1911, is a document that will live in our history, realised the justice of the anti-partition agitation and expressed its views in some remarkable passages of that most remarkable dispatch. "Various circumstances," says the dispatch, "have forced upon us the conviction that the bitterness of feeling engendered by the Partition of Bengal is both widespread and unyielding."

"That the resentment among the Bengalis in both provinces of Bengal. . . . is as strong as ever"; that though the opposition to the partition was at first based mainly on sentimental grounds yet since the enlargement of the Legislative Councils on a representative basis, the grievance of the Bengalis has become much more real and tangible and is likely to increase instead of to diminish. "Every one with any true desire for the peace and prosperity of this country must wish to find some manner of appeasement if it is in any way possible to do so."

Among the many evils of the partition, Lord Hardinge's Government point out, one is "that it is, in part at any rate, responsible for the growing estrangement which has now unfortunately assumed a very serious character in many parts of the country between Hindus and Mahomedans". Recording these serious evils, Lord Hardinge's Government recommended to the Secretary of State the annulment of the Bengal Partition, and so it has come to pass that our most gracious Sovereign, on the advice of the two distinguished and generous-hearted statesmen who are at the head of the Indian administration

has reversed that measure and, in place of that, given the Bengalis a United Presidency under a Governor in Council, a boon for which not only Bengal but the whole of India is most deeply grateful to His Majesty; for the cause of Bengal is the cause of all India, and its triumph marks the triumph of the claims of justice over those of prestige and will go far to strengthen our faith in the efficacy of constitutional agitation, carried on in a loyal and law-abiding spirit, under British rule. Bengal waged a brave struggle against a great army, and it has won a great victory. The victory is due to the heroic courage and self-sacrifice of those selfless and patriotic leaders who, through all the storm that raged round them and the clouds of sorrow and suffering that darkened their path,

> Saw the distant gates of Eden gleam
> And did not dream it was a dream,

but retained their undying faith in their cause and an immovable trust in British justice, have at last succeeded in the most momentous constitutional struggle of modern India, and have thereby set an inspiring example to the whole nation.

THE CHANGE OF CAPITAL

The transfer of the political capital of the Government of India from Calcutta to Delhi is an announcement even more striking and more far-reaching in its effects upon our national fortunes. Delhi is the eternal city of Hindustan and is associated with the most glorious and romantic memories of both the Hindu and Mahomedan times, and the high honour which has been conferred upon it by our King-Emperor will be most deeply appreciated by millions of his subjects. Calcutta will not lose its importance, for that lies in the wealth, culture and public spirit of its people, who will retain their eminent position in future as befits their remarkable qualities, while a new life will spring up in the ancient and historic city of Delhi. And great and noble as are the monuments of her past splendour, yet greater and nobler monuments will

arise, not to dim but to add to that splendour by associating it with the bounty and beneficence of one of the noblest Sovereigns that historic India has ever known.

Gentlemen, in mental and moral endowments the people of Upper India are not inferior to the people of any other Indian province; but the social and political conditions obtaining there have, in a great measure, tended to obstruct their progress, and some years will elapse before we can expect to see that public life there which we see in our Presidency towns. For some years, undoubtedly, the new capital will not be able to show political activity for which Calcutta is justly famous, and its public opinion cannot perhaps carry anything like the same weight; but when it becomes the seat of the Supreme Government, and new institutions arise there, as in course of time they must, and men from the four quarters of the globe are drawn to it for business or pleasure, and it becomes the theatre of important political actions, a new spirit will arise among its inhabitants, which spreading beyond its limits will carry its contagion to the Punjab on the one side and the United Provinces on the other, and may, as the years roll by, be expected to send a vivifying thrill through the veins of the feudal system of the Indian States. A great future lies before Delhi, and through her influence, before the whole of Upper India; and it is my firm belief that the cause of Indian nationalism, which owes so much to the people of Bengal, will gain, not lose, by the establishment of conditions under which the Hindustanis and the Punjabis will be induced to shake off their sloth and enter with zest and vigour in the larger, wider and more stirring life of the new times.

NEW LIEUTENANT-GOVERNORSHIP AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

As a necessary consequence of the momentous changes to which I have just referred, Behar, with Chota Nagpur and Orissa, has been given a Lieutenant-Governor with an Executive Council and a Legislative Council, which is a most wise and most generous concession to the best public

opinion of that important and rising province, and has been hailed with gratitude throughout all India. Indeed in that concession the United Provinces, the Punjab, and the Central Provinces detect a happy augury for their own future. Self-Government on a wider, more popular and more independent basis is the chief note of the Royal boons; Lord Hardinge's liberal and broad-minded statesmanship is the surest pledge and guarantee that the policy of autonomy will be pursued in every province and that Executive and Legislative Councils will be set up where they do not exist at present. The Central Provinces cannot remain long without a Lieutenant-Governor and a Council, nor the Punjab without an Executive Council. The claim of the United Provinces to have an Executive Council is so strong and has been so persistently urged by the unanimous voice of the people that but for the present Lieutenant-Governor, who apparently favours a more autocratic and less constitutional system of government, it would have been conceded long ago. But it is reasonable to hope that it would be conceded before long under a new and liberal-minded Lieutenant-Governor. My hope is strengthened by the spontaneous concession to Behar of Council-Government which, I feel sure, may be taken as a pledge that the older United Provinces for which such Government was promised long years ago, will very soon have an Executive Council. May I not also express the hope that the United Provinces, which now is the first of all the provinces in population while it is second to none in importance, may not have to wait long for a Governor sent out from England?

OTHER DURBAR BOONS

The generous grant to popular education will be deeply appreciated not only by the educated classes but also by the masses; for in her present condition India needs nothing more urgently than that the light of knowledge should penetrate her households, and the King's interest in her intellectual advancement, of which the Durbar boon is only an earnest, is a message of hope to our reformers who are trying so nobly to lay the foundations

of mass education in India. The boon conferred upon the Indian Army cannot fail to send a thrill of joy and thankfulness through the hearts of one of the most loyal and devoted class of his gracious Majesty's Indian subjects, and we are justified in hoping that before long higher ranks in the military service will be opened to the Indian people. There are other acts of clemency and generosity for which the King's visit will be for ever memorable. The Indian people have seen their Sovereign and have been enabled to appreciate his boundless generosity, his deep and touching regard for the true welfare, his great justice, and his mercy, which is even greater. Gentlemen, loyalty to their Sovereign is innate in the Indian people of all colours and creeds ; it is enjoined by their religion and is one of the basic principles of their morality ; and it flows naturally, spontaneously, and without measure and stint towards a Monarch who is just, merciful, benevolent and magnanimous. Queen Victoria was the first British Sovereign who, by her own personal influence, united India and England by ties of sympathy and affection ; King Edward strengthened those ties still further ; and now King-Emperor George V and his most noble Queen have shown by their visit that India is as dear to them as England, that the two nations are comrades in a common cause, and entitled to equal opportunities in their endeavours to realise a common destiny. May they live long to rule over a happy and prosperous Empire !

BRITISH ACHIEVEMENTS IN INDIA

Gentlemen, we have met to-day on a most auspicious occasion—the eve of the King's visit to this great city—which is likely to make this sitting of the Congress a most memorable one. While about to review the present political situation, that visit brings most vividly before my mind, as I have no doubt it does before the minds of all of you, the countless blessings we enjoy under British rule—epecially the last fifty years of our direct connection with the British Crown have been marked by great and lasting benefits to the Indian people.

Peace, order and perfect security of life and property have been secured to us to a degree never known to the old Roman Empire and even now not to be seen anywhere beyond the limits of the British Empire. A genuine and an active interest in the welfare of the masses, as is shown by its famine, plague, sanitation and agrarian measures, is its abiding and noblest feature. Perfect religious and social freedom it has given us unasked ; and Railways, Telegraphs, Post Offices and a thousand other instruments and appliances are the means by which it has added to our material comfort and social advancement. The educational system which has immortalised the names of Bentinck and Macaulay is perhaps its greatest gift to the people of India. The spread of English education, as it has instructed our minds and inspired us with new hopes and aspirations, has been accompanied by gradual and cautious concessions of political rights—the admission of Indians into the public service, the introduction of local self-government and the reform of the Legislative Councils on a partially representative basis. We have a government whose justice is exemplary and a civil service which in ability, integrity, zeal, and genuine regard, according to its own lights, for those entrusted to its care, has no rival in the world. When I think of the dependencies ruled by other European powers—of Algeria and Tonquin under the French, of parts of Africa under the Germans—of the large negro populations in the United States, as the republican Americans treat and govern them—I thank God that I am a British subject, and feel no hesitation in saying that the government of India by England—faulty as it is in many respects and greatly as it needs to be reformed and renovated from top to bottom—is still the greatest gift of Providence to my race ; for England is the only country that knows how to govern those who cannot govern themselves.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE BUREAUCRACY

Having said this much, I will not be misunderstood when I venture to point out that like many human institutions

British rule in India has its defects and shortcomings—which are neither few nor slight—which it is well for its own sake as well as for ours that it should try to remove and that it is the equal duty of both Indians and Englishmen to work and strive together for their removal. So far as it rests with Indians to discharge that great duty, it is done by the Congress by its humble but earnest endeavours. For the last 23 years it has been telling the people what they owe to the British Government, and the British Government what it might do to make its rule even more beneficent than it is. But by a strange perversity of fate this organisation—national in its composition and loyal and patriotic in its aims—has been maligned, misrepresented, abused and ridiculed. The European community—official and non-official—boycotted the Congress from the beginning, the Anglo-Indian press made it a target for its scorn and contumely; and it was after it had passed through many ordeals and weathered many storms, that Lord Hardinge's wise statesmanship extended to it that friendly and sympathetic reception which it ought to have received a quarter of a century ago.

A new India has, however, arisen under the impact of Western influences. We have learnt western modes of thought, western conceptions of liberty, western ideals of government; a wholesome discontent with the existing order of things has sprung up and a perfectly just dissatisfaction with many political evils and disabilities which are a relic of the past and are discordant with the needs and aspirations of the present.

The root-cause of most of our misfortunes, which, if not corrected, forebodes serious disasters in the future, is the growth of an unsympathetic and illiberal spirit in the bureaucracy towards the new-born hopes and ideals of the Indian people. While a new India has gradually been rising up, that spirit too has been growing and so the critical situation has arisen; on the one hand, the educated classes, filled with new knowledge and conscious of new political rights, but hampered by the bars and fetters of a system perhaps good enough for other days but now

obsolete; on the other, the bureaucracy with its vested interests, its domineering habits, its old traditions of obsolete and unquestioned authority, suspicious of knowledge and averse to innovation like every close corporation, cut off from the people by its racial exclusiveness, and wedded to a paternal system of government under which it has so long enjoyed power and pelf but which is discordant with the more liberal ideals of the present day.

The champions of the bureaucracy stoutly contest this statement and say, as Mr. Chirol does, that "the contrary is the case, for to him (the Anglo-Indian Civilian) belongs the credit of almost every measure passed during the last 50 years for the benefit of the Indian masses, and passed frequently in the teeth of vehement oppositon from the Indian politician", and that he has always been sympathetic in dealing with the larger problems of Indian statesmanship. There is just that half-truth in this statement which so easily deceives the unwary. Undoubtedly Anglo-Indian officials have done great things for the people, undoubtedly some of them have been large-hearted and far-seeing statesmen. But the history of the last 25 or 30 years shows that leaving out a few noble exceptions, as a body they have not been in sympathy with the new aspirations of educated India, which owes few of its political rights to their initiative and support. In Lord Ripon's time they opposed the Ilbert Bill which was introduced to establish some equality of criminal law as between Indians and Englishmen. They opposed his measure of local self-government, and although it was passed, yet they have succeeded (as Lord Morley acknowledged) in making it more or less ineffectual down to the present day. In Lord Dufferin's time the Congress was started, and their hostility to it has been notorious. Lord Lansdowne accepted the Indian Councils Act of 1892 because it was a too cautious measure, and the bureaucracy was unaffected by it. Lord Elgin proved a weak Viceroy and the reactionary tendencies of the bureaucracy began to manifest themselves in a variety

of ways. Lord Curzon adopted a frankly narrow and autocratic policy, and was heartily supported by the bureaucracy. His educational policy dealt a severe blow to our higher education, and the bureaucracy blessed him. He flouted public opinion, treated the educated classes with marked contempt, proudly declared that he was opposed to all political concessions, treated the Queen's Proclamation as "an impossible charter", and he was praised. In order to break up the solidarity of the Bengali race, one of the most active and intelligent section of His Majesty's Indian subjects, he devised the partition scheme, in which he was most loyally supported by the bureaucracy. The fateful measure shook all India and was not a little responsible for so many of our recent misfortunes. But when even Lord Curzon attempted once or twice to deal out even-handed justice between Indians and Englishmen, the Anglo-Indian community—official and non-official—became indignant and he was made to feel his indiscretion. His rule created that situation which Lord Morley and Lord Minto had to face. Did the bureaucracy suggest that policy of reform with which these two statesmen set about to allay the discontent which the preceding administration had created or intensified? No; their advice was, coercion—not conciliation. But Lord Minto realised the real nature of the Indian discontent and in Lord Morley he found even a more thorough-going reformer than himself. The bureaucracy, if not actively hostile, were certainly cool in the matter. The first draft scheme published by the Government of India was their handiwork and was at once condemned by the whole Indian public. Lord Morley transformed it into a more liberal and popular scheme, the bureaucracy mangled and mutilated it. The point, however, is that the policy of reform did not originate with them, on the contrary it was opposed by them. Even the President of that extremely loyal body, the Muslim League, was constrained to say at Nagpur that "there can be little doubt that had Lord Morley relied chiefly on official sources of information, and looked at Indian affairs through official glasses only, we should, in all probability, have been landed in a

terrible mess, if not actual disaster". But when Lords Morley and Minto were, under the pressure of certain circumstances, led to embark upon coercion, the bureaucracy supported them most heartily and cried for more coercion. The Muslim League found every encouragement to act as a counterpoise to the national movement and virtually forced Lord Morley to introduce communal representation on the separatist principle into the Legislative Councils. It was not the bureaucracy who suggested the appointment of Indians to the Governor-General's Executive Council and the India Council. They are still opposed to our admission to the higher grades of the public service, and our local Governments have already expressed their disapproval of free and compulsory primary education for India. When on the occurrence of certain abominable crimes, the cry for "martial law and no damned nonsense" arose in India, it was Lord Morley and not the bureaucracy who first called upon the Government "to rally the moderates" to its side; Lord Minto and not the body of the Civil Service who at once realised the legitimate character of Indian unrest and decided to meet it by measures of reform and conciliation. When the Calcutta High Court vindicated British justice in certain important political cases, the officials became restive and the note of alarm was sounded in the Anglo-Indian press. When Lord Hardinge passed the Seditious Meetings Act, against the best opinion of the country, he was heartily applauded by the Anglo-Indians; but when like a wise and far-seeing ruler, he relaxed the policy of coercion and put a stop to wholesale political prosecution, they began to suspect his wisdom and firmness and the *Times* came out with its warnings and admonitions in the cause of law and order. And now that Lord Hardinge's Government have made

a pronouncement of one of the most weighty decisions ever taken since the establishment of British rule in India, a bold stroke of statesmanship which would give unprecedented satisfaction, and will for ever associate so unique an event as the visit of the reigning Sovereign to his Indian dominions with a new era in the history of India,

the Anglo-Indian community are pouring the vitriols of their wrath in the most undignified manner upon the devoted heads of our good Secretary of State and the Viceroy.

I am sorry to have to say all this against a body of Englishmen whose ability, honesty and high sense of duty we all gladly acknowledge, but when exaggerated claims are made on their behalf, with the deliberate intent of disparaging the educated classes, it is necessary that the truth must be spoken out. And the truth is that a general distrust of the educated classes and an utter disregard of their opinions have unfortunately become the characteristic marks of Anglo-India.

The educated classes speak out and criticise Government measures freely and their views are said to be selfish and at variance with the interest and sentiments of the general population. The masses are silent and their silence is supposed to show their contentment with their lot and everything that the Government does. This is a familiar method of disposing of opponents of an unpopular system. A governor who, like Lord Curzon, does not want to make any reforms, says :

> I am for the silent masses whom nobody represents except myself ; the educated are a selfish lot and do not understand their countrymen.

But there is another view which also deserves some consideration. The clamour of the educated classes means that those who are intelligent enough to understand British rule are discontented with many of its acts, while those who are silent—are quite contented, if you will—are the ignorant masses. Surely a civilised Government has no reason to feel proud of this. Seeking refuge in the contentment of ignorance from the attacks of knowledge and intelligence is surely not an enviable position for the British Government to be placed in. To disparage the educated classes is to discredit Western civilization and to cast an unmerited suspicion upon the real justification of British rule in India. The policy of distrust of the educated

classes and antipathy to the new aspirations is responsible for the recent Press legislation and other coercive measures.

It is true that Lord Minto came at a time when India was seething with unrest, due partly to general causes and partly to the unsympathetic and reactionary policy of Lord Curzon. He sowed the wind and Lord Minto had to reap the whirlwind. The unrest in some parts of Bengal and some other provinces took the form of anarchical crimes and sedition, and it became the duty of the Government to suppress it with a strong hand. So far it had the support of every sensible Indian; but its hands were forced by the panic-stricken Anglo-Indian community, and both Lord Morley and Lord Minto, while busy on the one hand with framing reform measures to allay public discontent, inaugurated on the other hand a policy of coercion. The most loyal of their Indian supporters protested against it, but in vain. Deportations without trials, prosecutions for sedition, ordinances for the suppression of public meetings, prosecutions of schoolboys for their follies, became the order of the day. In justice to Lords Morley and Minto it must be said that at first they were slow to move, and when Sir Bampfylde Fuller insisted upon establishing a reign of terror in East Bengal, he had to go. But the Anglo-Indian community grew impatient, and the cry for repressive measures became stronger than before. Lord Minto's Government set about suppressing seditious crime by two methods—first, by passing repressive laws to curtail the liberty of the press and of public meetings; and secondly, by invoking the help and co-operation of Indian Chiefs. The wise advice "to rally the moderates" was forgotten, and the Government, instead of listening to such appeals as were made to them by Dr. Rash Behari Ghosh and Mr. Gokhale in the Imperial Council, turned to those who as a class are not noted for liberal political sentiments. The sight of the Government of India turning to Indian Chiefs for help in restoring peace and order in India by gagging the press and suppressing public meetings and deporting men without trial, reminds me of a story about St. Simon, the founder of a school of

Socialism, as to how he proferred himself in marriage to Madame de Stael. He said: "Madam, you are the most extraordinary woman in the world. I am the most extraordinary man. Between us, we should, no doubt, make a child more extraordinary still." So, probably, thought the Government of India when it proposed to Indian Chiefs to unite with it and by this happy union to produce some policy better than the unaided brains of either of the parties could produce. But when the Government of India was eager to devise repressive measures to put down Indian unrest, the late Nizam wrote a letter to Lord Minto, which must have caused deep searchings of the Anglo-Indian heart and which, coming from an Indian Prince to an English Viceroy, is certainly one of the most remarkable documents of our time. On the point how the so-called sedition was to be combated, the late Nizam said:

> The experience that I have acquired within the last 25 years in ruling my State encourages me to venture upon a few observations which I trust will be accepted in the spirit in which they are offered. I have already said that my subjects are, as a rule, contented, peaceful and law-abiding. For this blessing I have to thank my ancestors. They were singularly free from all religious and social prejudices. Their wisdom and foresight induced them to employ Hindus and Mahomedans, Europeans and Parsis alike, in carrying on the administration and they reposed entire confidence in their officers, whatever religion, race, sect or creed they belonged to. . . . . It is in a great measure to this policy that I attribute the contentment and well-being of my dominions.

The Government, however, was bent upon a different course at that time and adopted a series of repressive measures. An old Bengal Regulation was unearthed under which a number of persons were deported without trial. A stringent Press Act was passed last year. The late Sir Herbert Risley who was in charge of the measure explained to the Council what he meant by 'sedition' in India. According to him, to say that "the Government is foreign and therefore selfish"; that "it drains the country of its wealth and has impoverished the people"; that "it allows Indians to be ill-treated in British colonies"; that "it levies heavy taxes and spends them on

the army". . . . . "pays high salaries to Englishmen and employs Indians only in the worst paid posts" is sedition.

His statement is extremely interesting, for I fully believe it represents the views of Europeans in this country; and a good many Anglo-Indian magistrates would be too glad to interpret 'sedition' in the spirit of that statement. Even as it is, the Act affected for the worse a large number of Indian papers, good, bad, and indifferent; and perhaps all live with the sword of Damocles hanging over their heads. The Executive has obtained a direct hold over the press, because it can demand heavy security from any paper, and from this order there is no appeal to a court of law. If this is not discouraging free criticism I do not know what is. It may be that good papers have no fear; but the existence of a bad law is a standing menace to all; for it is the Executive which sets the criterion of journalistic goodness. We can understand why the Anglo-Indian Press and the Anglo-Indian community supported the Press Act. They know that they are quite safe; they may abuse us to their heart's content, remind us of 'the tiger qualities' of the ruling race, call Lord Morley an accomplice of the murderer of Mr. Ashe; but they know that no governor will have the temerity to call them to account for their conduct. Let the Anglo-Indian papers be treated under the Press Act as the Indian papers are treated, and it is my firm belief that either their violent writing against Indians will stop or the Act itself will cease to exist. Talk of Indian journalists spreading sedition, why, if I were an enemy of British rule, I would not write a line of my own, but translate articles from our Anglo-Indian papers and spread them broadcast among the people. There is no more potent cause of the strained relations between the rulers and the ruled than the growing sense in the Indian people that they are abused by a section of the Anglo-Indian press and yet the Government would not take any notice of their writings. Will a statesman ever arise who will have the courage to put a stop to this evil?

The Seditious Meetings Act is of a piece with the Press Act. If you gag the press, you cannot let free the platform. It was first passed as a temporary means when sedition was said to be at its height in this country. In the beginning of this year, the close of which was to witness the King's visit, it was placed permanently upon the Statute-Book. Like the Press Act, it was opposed by Indian opinion and by some of the ablest and most experienced members of the Imperial Council. But it was passed; and the only thing that can be said for it is that Lord Hardinge's Government have removed some of its most objectionable features and kept it in abeyance. But the measure is on the Statute-Book, and we cannot expect to have always a Lord Hardinge at the helm of the Government. Even in constitutionally governed countries it is the tendency of the Executive to encroach upon the province of the judiciary; in a country governed as India is, the Executive is always suspicious of every power not held directly from itself and not amenable to its arbitrary control. The weapons have been forged for the suppression of public opinion and are in the arsenal of the Government of India. As soon as we have a Viceroy who is not so wise and liberal-minded as the present Viceroy, and if at the same time we happen to have a Conservative Government in England, rest assured we shall feel the full effect of those weapons. This point is worthy of the consideration of the English people. For in the last resort it is the British democracy whose servant the Indian Government is and for whose wise or unwise actions it is responsible.

But British democracy cannot properly supervise the work of its agents, if it is not kept well informed of the real facts of the situation. It has channels enough through which it can receive official information, but the people's view of public questions it can have only through the agency of the press and the platform. If those avenues are closed to it, it is deprived of all power to exercise any wise and intelligent control over the Government here. And no greater calamity can befall India than that the check now exercised by British

democracy through its Parliament over our affairs, should be slackened or removed. No one recognises this truth more fully than Lord Morley, and yet he is as much reponsible for the repressive measures of our day as any one connected with the Government of India. He has, in many respects, been the greatest Indian Secretary of State, but the stain of the policy of repression will remain upon his otherwise glorious and beneficent administration.

COUNCIL REGULATIONS

But in spite of all these repressive measures, there are signs on the horizon to show that our rulers are beginning to be alive to the needs and requirements of the New India, and the following remarkable passage in Lord Hardinge's great dispatch foreshadows some most important changes on popular lines which we may expect to take place in the existing system:—

> Yet the country will have to be satisfied and the question will be how this devolution of power can be conceded without impairing the supreme authority of the Governor-General-in-Council. The only possible solution of the difficulty would appear to be gradually to give the provinces a larger measure of self-government until at last India would consist of a number of administrations, autonomous in all provincial affairs, with the Government of India above them and possessing power to interfere in case of misgovernment; but ordinarily restricting the functions to matters of Imperial concern.

It is in the spirit of the above passage that the following criticisms on the Council Regulations are offered. The benefits of the reforms associated with the names of Lords Morley and Minto are, to my mind, quite obvious, and I, for one, can never bring myself to agree with those who minimise their importance or their beneficence. Compare the old and new Councils in point of the proportion of Indian members, the recognition of the elective principle, and their functions; and the great step forward which has been taken becomes at once apparent. The Reforms are incomplete and in many respects are defective, and can never be considered final; but they are substantial, and our sincerest gratitude is due to their authors. Our present complaint is against the Regulations

framed under the new Councils Act, which are extremely faulty, and in some important respects defeat the object of that Act. Lord Minto's Government made a great mistake in not consulting the public at the time of framing the Regulations. The Act was hailed with joy by the whole Indian people, but the Regulations courted a wide-spread disappointment. Lord Minto declared that the Regulations were tentative and would be amended in the light of experience.

But the Government of India's announcement, made the other day, that no substantial amendment of the Regulations was contemplated has filled the public mind with disappointment. If the announcement was intended to close all discussion of the question of amending the Regulations for the time being, then it is one against which this Congress will be perfectly justified in entering its respectful but most emphatic protest; for the Regulations are full of such glaring defects as amount to postive injustice to large classes of His Majesty's Indian subjects, defects which are calculated to turn the elective principle into a mockery and the enlarged functions into an illusion which mar the beneficence of a great concession, and will, if not speedily corrected, prove detrimental to the best interests of the Government itself. But since there is to be a territorial redistribution, necessitating a substantial modification of the Regulations, I trust that the occasion will be utilised by the Government to remove at least the more serious of their defects. And in this hope I now invite your attention to a brief examination of some of their most objectionable features.

First, as to the principle of communal representation. That it is an innovation in the governmental system, will, I hope, be readily admitted. But for the purpose of my argument, I assume its expediency under the present state of things and contend only against the method of its application. India is unfortunately split up into many communities, each of which is entitled to its proper share of representation and no sensible man

has ever disputed this claim. But to secure representation in the Councils to every important community by a general electorate is one thing, and to secure it by its own communal and exclusive suffrage is quite another. While the former is a unifying agency which enables men of each community to co-operate with those of others in the common interests of the whole country, the latter is a disintegrating agency by which sectional interests come to claim the first regard of every member and those difficulties and troubles arise which we notice in respect of the separate representation of Mahomedans and landlords.

I shall take up the Mahomedan case first. This is a delicate question, but those who know me well, I hope, need no special assurance from me how deep and sincere is my regard for the great Mahomedan community; how much I regret the feeling of estrangement which has sprung up between the two communities in recent years; for, believing as I do that the ultimate good of India lies in the union of both, it is the most cherished desire of my heart that this estrangement may be healed and that some basis of compromise and accommodation may be found which may be honourable to both and detrimental to neither. I know what India owes to Mahomedans; I know what mark they have made in the world's history; I know how cordial have been our relations with them, how even now outside the dusty atmosphere of politics those relations remain undisturbed. It is therefore not to rake up old disputes, nor to cast any aspersions upon the Mahomedan community, but to state a case which needs to be frankly and honestly stated that I venture to place before you a few facts bearing upon the question of Mahomedan representation in the Legislative Councils.

In the first draft scheme of the Government of India the principle of communal representation appeared in its most extreme form. It is denounced by the whole country but approved by an influential section of the Mahomedans who had interpreted a certain passage in Lord Minto's

speech to the All-India Mahomedan deputation, in their own way. Lord Morley transformed and liberalised that scheme—accepting the principle of communal representation on the basis of the numerical proportion of the Hindu and Mahomedan communities and of joint electorates for both. The Muslim League agitation arose and demanded a separate electorate and excessive representation, mainly on the ground of 'historical and political importance'. The bureaucracy and the Anglo-Indian press in India, and the Tory press and some retired Anglo-Indian officials in England, supported this claim. Lord Morley reluctantly yielded to the opposition in the end and conceded to the Mahomedans both separate and excessive representation. Injustice was done to the Hindus but they remained quiet. When the Regulations were published, they realised for the first time how much they had lost by their silent trust in the authorities here.

They suffered not only injustice but indignity and humiliation at the hands of those who ought to have safeguarded their interests. Some local Governments were openly unsympathetic to the Hindus. In the United Provinces and the Punjab they were treated as the remnants of a disinherited race. Some of the most public-spirited Mahomedans have always sympathised with this grievance of the Hindus. The Hon. Mr. Mazhar-ul Haque and Mr. Hasan Imam, who, I believe, are as true Mahomedans as any in India and the former of whom is also an important member of the Muslim League, have always stood by us upon this question of the excessive representation of Mahomedans. Lord MacDonnell has always been opposed to it; and one of the very first utterances of the present Viceroy was that special favours to one community meant disability to others. On what ground is it possible to justify this unequal treatment? The Mahomedans, I admit, are in every way qualified for political franchise and for membership, but are the Hindus less qualified? The argument of "political importance" as it is put forward by the Muslim League, is beyond the pale of rational discussion. The only sense

in which it can apply to any community in India is that which Mr. Gokhale, who knows if any Indian does, how to expose dialectical sophistries, explained before the Viceroy's Council in the course of the debate which took place on Mr. Malaviya's Resolution on the amendment of the Council Regulations.

The Resolution excited an angry debate and the argument of 'political importance' was paraded, tricked out in the costumes of sham industry. Anyhow history is like the child's box of the letters of alphabet, which you may arrange in any way you please and spell any word you please. I, therefore, wish to say nothing further about the argument than this, that the Hindus will never tolerate that argument or admit any kind of superiority of any Indian community over themselves, that they are the King's equal subjects and claim to be treated as such, that they feel that they have been subjected to an unmerited humiliation by their Government and that they shall never rest contented so long as that humiliation is not removed. Mr. (now Sir Lewis) Jenkins, the Home Member, perpetrated a cynical joke at their expense when, to Mr. Malaviya's Resolution, he replied that before the Government could undertake to correct the disproportionate representation of Mahomedans, the Hindus must first convert the Mahomedans to their view. It is official pronouncements like this which compromise the strict equity of British rule.

Now it must never be forgotten that the Hindus never said that the Mahomedan representation in the Council should be strictly according to the numerical strength of the Mahomedan community and consequently they never grudged Lord Morley's concession of representation to the Mahomedans, "somewhat in excess of their numerical strength", although they urged that there should be one general electorate for both communities and that the excess should be made up by Government nominations. Subsequently, finding themselves face to face with the demand for total separation, they agreed to the present system of Mahomedan

representation as the lesser of the two evils, and in the belief that only a few seats would be left open for the separate Mahomedan electorate. But the Regulations secured to the Mahomedans excessive representation by means of their separate electorate, and over and above that, gave them the right to secure as many seats as they could through the joint electorate. This was a great deal more than Lord Morley had ever intended, and for this the Government of India is wholly responsible.

Undoubtedly joint electorates have their advantages; they are a check upon the evil of total separation and hence some of our most enlightened leaders have always supported them. But it is my decided opinion which I believe is shared by a considerable body of my countrymen and which I here venture to express with due deference to some of my most public-spirited Mahomedan friends, that with the excessive representation secured to the Mahomedans, through their separate electorates, joint electorates are incompatible, and that if this excessive representation remains it would be impossible to maintain them. For the existing arrangement puts the Hindus in a very awkward position. If, when the Mahomedans have secured a share of representation in excess of what their numbers justify by means of their separate electorate, the Hindus oppose them in the elections by joint electorates, they lay themselves open to the charge of sectarian hostility and other charges which partisanship can invent; but if they act otherwise they deprive themselves even of that little which they owe to the bounty of Anglo-Indian impartiality. Is it fair to the Hindus that they should be thus placed between the devil and the deep sea? You will observe, Gentlemen, that in urging this point I set up no claim of historical, or political or any other sort of importance on behalf of the Hindus, but only the claim of justice and equity.

Then there are other concessions which have been made to the Mahomedans and refused to the Hindus. They have been given direct representation which has not

been given to the Hindus. Their voting qualifications are easier and more liberal than those laid down for the Hindus. I do not object to these concessions to the Mahomedans; I think they are just and wise, but I contend that the Hindus are equally entitled to them. The Regulations concerning this matter need to be amended, for as they are, they are unfair to the Hindus, and indeed to every other community except the Mahomedans.

Some local Governments, it would seem, were not satisfied even with the excessive representation conceded to the Mahomedans under the Regulations, and they added to it by further nominations. The Governments of the Punjab and the United Provinces have been conspicuous for this liberality to the Mahomedans, though the Hindus have suffered.

It is this one-sided policy of the Government on the one hand and the separatist propaganda started by a section of the Mahomedans on the other, which have excited and to some extent even embittered the Hindu mind. In politics the Hindus of modern times have never been sectarian, the greatest political movement in which they have always taken a conspicuous part has been national from the beginning, and they have always been the staunchest opponents of the separatist policy in any shape or form. But the enemies of Indian nationalism have proved too strong after all. Whenever there is an attempt—however feeble it may be—to bring about reconciliation between the two great communities, they do their worst to frustrate it. When, under the advice of Sir William Wedderburn and H. H. the Aga Khan, the representatives of the two communities were about to meet at Allahabad a year ago, with the object of reconciling their differences, an Anglo-Indian paper, which is believed to be an organ of the Civil Service, remarked: "Why do these men want to unite the two communities if it is not to unite them against the Government?" This one remark throws a ghastly light upon the political situation in India. And yet in some quarters the Hindus have sometimes

been blamed for starting their own organisations while no objection seems to be felt to the Muslim League. Sectarian political organisations are always objectionable, and nowhere more so than in India, where racial, religious, and social prejudices are apt to enter into their composition and colour and pervert the real aim for which they are started. But when once a community adopts the policy of exclusiveness and separation and is encouraged in its unwise course by those who ought to know better, the other communities, whose interests are thus threatened, cannot be blamed if they adopt a similar policy in sheer self-defence. It is not easy to preach the virtue of forbearance to those who are smarting under a sense of humiliation and whose every effort for reconciliation is attributed to some dark and sinister design on their part.

I am a nationalist and detest sectarianism in politics, but I think the circumstances of the time furnish ample justification for the starting of Hindu Sabhas at least in some parts of the country.

Still my faith in Indian nationalism is so strong that I look upon the rise of sectarian movements as a passing phase. Whatever partisans on both sides may say, the Hindus and Mahomedans are the true indestructible factors of Indian nationality, the interests of both are identical and the one cannot do without the other. Beyond the questions of their share in Council representation or in the public service, lie questions of far wider and deeper importance, in the right solutions of which both are equally interested but which will never be rightly solved without the mutual efforts of both. I think sensible men are beginning to feel in their heart of hearts that the University schemes of the two communities would not at this moment be confronted by certain difficulties and labouring under certain disadvantages, if the Hindus and Mahomedans were more united than they are, and if the Government felt that it was face to face with the demand of a united people for education upon its own independent and national lines. Thus, while there are some disintegrating forces on the one hand, the intellectual upheaval of recent times has

revealed to us, on the other hand, the working of some forces which make for unity; and that man—be he Hindu or Mahomedan, Parsi or European—would be guilty of the gravest disservice to the country, who for the sake of some paltry personal or sectarian advantage would do anything to retard that unifying process, by raising false political issues or by reviving the memories of "old, unhappy, far-off things" over which time has thrown the curtain of oblivion.

The separate representation of the landlords is open to most of the objections raised against separate and excessive Mahomedan representation. The excessive representation of the landed interests of the Councils may be judged by the number of landlords that are there. Now, nobody denies the importance of the landed interest in India, but is its present representation fair to other classes and interests? Most of the landlords belong to the general middle class of the country, and form, therefore, considerable proportion of the electorates which are supposed to elect representatives of that class. The landlords, therefore, have a good chance of being elected by these electorates, and many of them have, as a matter of fact, been thus elected. But in addition to this, they have been given a substantial separate representation. They dominate the District Boards, they are strong in the Municipal Boards, and a large proportion of nominative seats are ordinarily kept open for them. The representatives of the educated classes are nowhere. And yet one of the main objects of Lord Morley's reforms was to make room in the Councils for an adequate proportion of these classes; and it was based upon a very sound principle. You want in the Councils men who are educated and more or less versed in public affairs, who have the intelligence to appreciate the ideals of British civilization and British government, and who alone are fitted by their training to help the Government in moulding our institutions according to the needs of the new times. The landed magnates are at best a conservative force—not in the sense in which that phrase is applicable to the landlord class in England, which is educated, intelligent and

conversant with public affairs—but a body of men who are backward in knowledge and wedded to retrospective habits of thought, and whose golden age lies behind the mists of the past. Their preponderance in the Councils can never be helpful to the Government in its work of reform, and especially in respect of agrarian legislation it is a positive drawback. They may be useful to the bureaucracy by way of a counterpoise to the opinions of the advanced classes—and this purpose they not unoften serve when Government has to brush aside some importunate demand of the educated classes—but they in no way represent the views and sentiments of the masses.

Our next complaint against the Regulations is that they have given us an extremely limited franchise, and except in the case of Mahomedans and landlords, the representation of the middle classes has been secured by indirect elections. For the Imperial Council, the general population has no vote whatever—Indian members of each Provincial Council, themselves elected by a certain number of delegates from the local boards, including one member for the local University, return two members to the Imperial Council. The process of election of members to the Provincial Council may be broadly stated thus: a limited proportion of the general population elects a certain number of members to the municipal and district boards, to which a certain proportion of nominated members is added. The boards composed of both the elected and the nominated members elect two or three delegates (except in Madras where under the new Regulations the members of the boards directly elect the members of the Council). The delegates thus elected by a certain number of municipal and district boards form a constituency to return a member to the Provincial Council. To call this process 'indirect election' is not accurate, because there are so many stages of the filtration of public opinion that you cannot say that the people have any real voice or choice in the election of councillors. The councillors are not responsible to the delegates who serve a temporary purpose and then disappear: the delegates are not responsible to

their respective boards, for it matters little to them what these boards think of their actions; the boards are not responsible to the people, for the people elect them for quite different purposes, and the election of members to the Council is certainly not one of them. This is enough to condemn the present system, but there is something more to be said against it; for in some Provinces the delegates of municipal and district boards are mixed up and the urban vote which belongs to the more educated classes living in towns is swamped by the vote of the rural population which is admittedly less advanced. Secondly, nearly half the members of the local boards are nominated by Government, and therefore the indirect influence of Government is present in every election. To call a member elected by this tortuous process a representative of the people is a misnomer. What is the extent of the franchise upon which even this peculiar election is based? Some twenty or twenty-five votes in a city of a hundred or two hundred thousand souls. If one of the principal functions of popular institutions is to give political education to the people, what can you say of a system in which not more than one in a thousand can have the slightest interest? As an instrument of popular education the present system is a failure. Not even the educated classes can be much interested, as hardly one per cent. of them is directly affected by it. In India, where the educated minority is very small, it is of the utmost importance that the interest of this minority should be enlisted in public affairs, and this can be achieved only by giving them a direct interest in the choice of their representatives. Therefore I contend that besides the local bodies, all men possessing certain educational and property qualifications should have votes for electing members to the Councils; and that the representation may be genuine and popular, the process of indirect election should be done away with as far as possible, the delegation system should be abolished, the nominated members of local bodies should have no Council franchise, and new constituencies should be formed consisting of elected members of local bodies and others who possess certain educational and property qualifications.

Even then the electorate will not be very large, and the constituencies will be much less democratic than those which elect directors to banks or railway boards in England.

Another point upon which I should like to make a few observations refers to the position of non-official majorities in Provincial Councils. One general objection which applies to all Councils is that the non-official majority is composed of both elected and nominated members, which, as the Councils are now constituted, means a standing and indeed an overwhelming official majority in every one of them. The Bengal Council is better off in this respect; for there the elected members have a small majority; but this, too, is ineffective as some of the elected members are practically official members. In every other Council the members returned under the present system are in a minority as against the official and nominated members combined. Take for instance the United Provinces Council which at present consists of 46 members—20 elected, 6 nominated, and the rest official members. Now, who are these six nominated members? Three are Indian Chiefs who seldom attend Council meetings; nor can we blame them for this; for really they have little interest in the ordinary legislation of British India, though they may always be depended upon to support the Government. One is a landed magnate who does not know English, one is an Englishman representing the indigo planters' interest, and one a Hindu banker also innocent of English. These six members are as good as the officials in the Council, and by their conduct have thoroughly justified their claims to be considered among the immovable adherents of the official view of public questions. What is true of the United Provinces Council is far more true of the Punjab Council, and more or less true of every other Council in India. I say nothing as to the composition of the elected minority itself, although when you consider that one of them is an Englishman, a representative of English trade, and

another an Indian member for the local University and consequently elected by a *quasi-official* body, the representation of independent Indian opinion would appear still more inadequate. Did Lord Morley mean this sort of non-official majority when he granted us the concession ? I do not think he did ; his intention was to give us a substantial non-official majority.

The authorities instead of giving us a genuine non-official majority have given us an illusory one. And we may judge the tree by its fruits. Nearly every resolution moved by the non-official Indian members in the United Provinces Council has been rejected—and rejected by overwhelming majorities ; for besides some of the elected members the nominated members were always ready to support the Government. I do not say that the Government should not be supported when it is in the right, nor that all the elected members should always be of one mind ; but I think that the largeness of the adverse majorities, if analysed, would show that the resolutions of the Indian members were defeated because the Council is so constituted that they can never command even a bare majority without the acquiescence of the Government. The bureaucracy have good reason to chuckle over Lord Morley's concession because they have found easy means to reduce it to a nullity in actual practice. Our demand upon this point is very moderate. We say that in every Provincial Council, there should be a clear majority of elected members. This will by no means weaken the Government by leaving it at the mercy of a hostile majority ; for this majority—whatever may be its extent—will be a composite majority of Indians and Englishmen, landlords and lawyers, Hindus and Mahomedans, who would on very rare occasions be found to present a united front to the Government, and when they do, it would, as I think and as Lord Morley himself said, be wise for the Government to reconsider its position and think twice before passing a measure confronted by a united and solid opposition of all the elected members.

When such is the case with the Provincial Councils where we have non-official majorities, it is perhaps useless to bewail the fate of Indian members' resolutions in the Imperial Council which possesses an official majority under the Statute. Yes, the reasons given by Lord Morley for giving non-official majorities to the Provincial Councils seem to me to apply with equal force to a similar arrangement in the Viceroy's Council as well. What is the good of debating a resolution when its defeat is a foregone conclusion. I do not deny that even this ineffectual and artificial debating is an improvement upon the past. The Government is, no doubt, put upon its defence, it has to state publicly its reasons for adopting or opposing any particular measure, and this, in my opinion, assists in some measure the political education of the people. But there is justice in our complaint nevertheless, and I think the Imperial Government would inspire greater confidence in the public, if it showed that its measures were passed after a genuine debate and not by the sheer force of its official votes.

There are many other very important points which require discussion, such as the powers given to Imperial and Provincial Governments to disallow the election of any one without giving any reason whatever, the restrictions placed upon the non-official members in respect of discussing certain matters and of dividing the Council on the Budget, etc. But I must not try your patience too much upon the question of Council Regulations, when I have yet to invite your attention, however briefly and concisely, to two or three other important matters which are now before the Government and in which the whole country is interested.

COMMUNAL REPRESENTATION IN LOCAL BODIES

I have discussed some of the most salient points with reference to the question of representation in the Legislative Councils. That question with special reference to local bodies has lately been brought to the front by the Government of the United Provinces. The famous Burn Circular has been widely discussed in the press, and as

you are aware, has deeply excited the whole Hindu community. When the Reform Scheme was before the public, Sir John Hewett discussed the question of introducing the principle of communal representation into our local bodies, and declared himself against it. In his letter to the Government of India, dated the 16th March 1908, he says that "he agrees with the general consensus of opinion, official and non-official, that there is no necessity for any radical change of principle, and the application to local bodies of any system of class representation appears to him uncalled for and inexpedient". In the United Provinces, the Mahomedans form 14 per cent. of the population as against 84 per cent. Hindus. But in 1909, according to Sir John Hewett, "Mahomedan electors formed 23 per cent. of the total number of electors for district boards. . . . In as many as 29 districts out of 45, the proportion of Mahomedan members was greater than the proportion of Mahomedans to the total population". According to him, of 663 members of district boards, 445 were Hindus and 189 Mahomedans (exclusive of official members), 562 were Hindus and 310 were Mahomedans, and so while holding that the "Mahomedans were entitled to more than a proportional representation, it could not be said that the present system affected them unfavourably". This was in 1909; in the middle of this year, after the issue of the Burn Circular, the Local Government obtained fresh statistics on the point which show that at present in district boards there are 116 Hindu and 67 Mahomedan elected members, 10 Hindu and 2 Mahomedan nominated members; and in municipal boards 207 Hindu and 89 Mahomedan elected members, and 36 Hindu and 36 Mahomedan nominated members.

I think these figures conclusively prove that the Mahomedans of the United Provinces have no real grievance in respect of their share in local self-government; that if anything they enjoy, it is a disproportionately large representation in local bodies, to which the Hindus have never yet objected, because of the friendly relations existing between the two communities, but which they will

now resent and justly resent, if the Mahomedans claim it as a matter of right, and the Government admits that right.

The Burn Circular is based upon the false assumption that the Government having given certain pledges to Mahomedans in respect of their separate and excessive representation in the Councils, they are entitled to the same concession in respect of local bodies and so it proposes that a certain proportion of their members in the boards should be secured to them by their separate electorate on the basis of their proportion in the general population with 50 per cent. added to it, while they should be free to take part in the mixed electorates as it would be helpful in maintaining friendly relations between the two communities. I will only say that this solicitude for promoting our unity is rather a heavy draft upon our credulity.

So this last proposal about the mixed electorates I dismiss without any further comment. But it is necessary to point out that the assumption as regards Lord Morley's so called pledges to Mahomedans is entirely unfounded, because in so far as he may be said to have given any pledge, it amounts only to this, that the representation of Mahomedans in the Councils should be, to use his own words, "somewhat in excess of their numerical strength", which is a very different thing from adding 50 per cent. to their representations, as has been done in the case of the Legislative Councils. Anyhow there is no pledge as regards Mahomedan representation in local bodies whose functions are quite different from those of the Councils and are governed by a different set of principles. Nobody has stated this point more ably or clearly than Sir John Hewett in his letter to which I have already referred.

If the proposals contained in the Burn Circular be given effect to in any form whatever, the Hindus of the United Provinces, so far as local self-government is concerned, will be practically nowhere, and this would be an injustice and a humiliation to which I am sure they will not willingly submit. You are aware how much public

excitement there has been upon this matter, how even those classes who take little interest in politics, our taluqdars and *raises*, have come forward to take part in the agitation against the Burn Circular, and how strongly that scheme has been condemned by the bulk of the Indian and an influential section of the Anglo-Indian press. The separatist policy of our local Government has begun to bear fruit in the United Provinces, and a large section of the Mahomedans has been encouraged to demand 50 per cent. of representation in local bodies. I know this is not the view of a considerable body of sensible Mahomedans; on the contrary some of their men of light and leading are strongly opposed to the separatist scheme, and whatever may be their views as regards the expediency of the present system of Mahomedan representation in the Councils, they are at one with the Hindus in thinking that separatism in local bodies will be disastrous to the best interests of both the communities and will gravely imperil the chance of reconciliation between them.

Although the question of communal representation in local bodies has been raised in the United Provinces, yet in my opinion, it affects all India. If the communal principle is adopted in one province, rest assured that other provinces will have to follow suit, soon or late. The Muslim League represents the views of a considerable body of Mahomedans all over India, and communal representation in local bodies is one of its principal demands. If the Government concedes that demand in one province, how can it resist it in others? But another difficulty is sure to arise. The Hindus, if they fail in arresting the course of the separatist policy, will never submit to joint electorates along with separate Mahomedan electorates. They already demand total separation on the basis of numbers, if there is no chance of retaining the existing system. When both the parties demand complete separation, the Government can have no just ground for resisting it. But if complete separation is once allowed in the case of local bodies, it would become impossible to maintain joint electorates for the Councils for long, and when these disappear and the

separatist spirit pervades the whole Indian system from top to bottom, all hopes for building up an Indian nationality must be abandoned for many generations to come. It is because I feel this apprehension that I wish to submit for your consideration one or two points regarding the far-reaching consequences of the separatist policy both in local bodies and in the Legislative Councils.

First, what moral effect is likely to be produced by separatism *plus* class privileges upon our national character? Is it good that our political institutions should be placed before us in the light in which we should see that ignorance and knowledge, poverty and riches, numerical strength and weakness stand on the same level so far as the possession of political rights is concerned? If in every civilised country, knowledge, property and numbers are the measure of political fitness, what would be the effect upon our national character if we are accustomed to think that the reverse is the case here—that Mahomedans because they are Mahomedans deserve favour, that Hindus because they are Hindus deserve its opposite—that right and wrong are not in the nature of things but are the creations of Government? Besides, what sort of citizens does the British Government wish to produce in India—such as shall be self-respecting and justice-loving, taught to love knowledge, truth, courage, independence and equality of civil rights, or, such as shall be unjust, corrupt, destitute of manliness, careless whether their political rights are respected by others or trampled under foot? If the former, then Government must show that it values justice, and respects those who respect themselves. How can Government discharge its high and noble function if we are placed under institutions which are based upon a perversion of all those high principles which we have hitherto been taught to hold sacred and inviolable?

Secondly, there is another moral danger with which the separatist policy is sure to bring us face to face one day. The idea of a united Indian nation may not be very alluring to some people, and a section of the Mahomedans may, for the present, fail to realize its true significance;

but the instructed classes do care for that ideal, and they see that it is menaced by separatism. Here they find themselves in disagreement with their rulers, not only in matters of detail which can be managed by accommodation and compromise, but in a matter of vital principle in respect of which no such management is possible. Now, to help the Government in its measure is the first duty of every loyal citizen; but to preserve the nation itself for which the Government exists and to oppose every measure which threatens its existence now or in future, is an even more important duty. This is an accepted principle in every civilized country and is so here, too, among those who understand Western ideals. Is it then desirable that a considerable section of the educated classes should be confronted by a situation in which they find that they cannot support Government policy? They must either approve Government's actions against their nationalist ideal, or serve the nationalist ideal against Government policy. Both alternatives are difficult. If they submit to separatism, and in a country already torn by social and sectarian differences allow those differences to be stereotyped into the permanent features of their political institutions, in view of the expediencies of the day, they sacrifice their most cherished convictions and destroy the nationalist ideal. If they resist it, they weaken the chances of their securing the good will of the Government, under which alone the realisation of their nationalist ideal is possible. For it is as clear as day that British rule in India, with all its faults and failings, all the shadows resting upon its career, is yet the symbol, the pledge, the guarantee of peace and progress, knowledge and freedom; to weaken it is to weaken the cause of civilisation. This is the dilemma which confronts the thinking portion of the Indian community, and there is no escape from it as long as, on the one hand, the people are taught, in colleges and schools and by hundred other means, Western ideals of liberty and nationality, Western conceptions of State duties and the right of individual man; while, on the other, they have to live under institutions which contradict these ideas. Is it reasonable to expect a people living in the

midst of these cross-currents of opposite and irreconcilable forces, to give for any length of time their moral allegiance to one set of principles and their practical allegiance to another?

THE PUBLIC SERVICE QUESTION

I wish to invite your attention for a moment to the question of the employment of Indians in the higher grades of the Public Service, which has been before the Government for nearly a century—a question with which are associated the noblest efforts of some of our most distinguished men, among whom stands pre-eminent, the name of our Grand Old Man, Dadabhai Naoroji, to whose sagacious but passionate advocacy for more than half a century we owe a great debt in this as in so many other matters, and who in the evening of a long life spent in the service of his country, yet retains undiminished his interest in the proper solution of that question. Gentlemen, so far as the views and keen intentions of the British Parliament and British Sovereigns are concerned, we have nothing to complain of and everything to be thankful for. In 1833, the British Parliament passed a famous Statute to the effect "that no native of India shall, by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them, be disabled from holding any place, office or employment under the British Government"; and the Board of Directors pointed out to the Government of India that "the meaning of the enactment we take to be that there shall be no governing caste in British India" and that "fitness is henceforth to be the criterion of eligibility". This Parliamentary pledge was reaffirmed in the noble words of Queen Victoria's Great Proclamation of 1858, which we all know by heart. No effect was given to these pledges for nearly 40 years. In 1870, for the first time, only one Indian was admitted to the Civil Service as against 825 Europeans. Those who want to know the history of these pledges up to date, ought to read the able and interesting pamphlet published by the Hon. Mr. N. Subba Rao Pantulu a few months back. The opinions of some of the most distinguished English

statesmen connected with India, are matters of history and have often been quoted. I shall quote a competent foreign observer, who is a friendly critic of the Indian Government and whose book on "The Administrative Problems of India", Lord Morley as well as the Civil Service has praised. M. Chailley says:

> About the year 1880, then after 50 years, I will not say of good will, but of attempts which were really honourable, the English had not yet succeeded in intimately connecting the natives with their administrative work. The Charter Acts of 1833 and 1853, the Proclamation of 1858 and the Act of 1870 had all been inefficacious,

and he calls those pledges "flattering words, solemn promises and blank cheques". In 1875, Lord Lytton said:

> We all know that these claims and expectations never can or will be fulfilled. We have had to choose between prohibiting them and cheating them; and we have chosen the least straightforward course.

And so it has happened that, as pointed out by the Hon. Mr. Subba Rao,

> from 1870 to 1886. . . . there were 11 Indians as against 576 (Europeans); from 1886 to 1910, 68 as against 1,235 Europeans. Thus, from 1853 up to date, there were only 80 Indians as against 2,636 Europeans, about 3 per cent. At the present moment we find 64 Indians as against 1,264 Europeans, a little over 5 per cent. of the total strength of the Civil Service.

If this is our position in what is called the Indian Civil Service, let us see how we stand in other departments of the Government. In the higher grades of the Police, our highest limit is 5 per cent.; in the Political Department, there is only one Indian. In the course of the Budget discussion in the early part of this year, Mr. Gokhale quoted certain figures, the accuracy of which was not questioned by the Government, which have a melancholy interest for the Indian people. In the Salt Department in all India, excluding Madras, out of 30 officers on salaries ranging from Rs. 500 to Rs. 3,000, only 3 are Indians; in the Customs, out of 21 officers with salaries ranging between Rs. 450 and Rs. 2,500 a month, only 2 are Indians; in the Post Office, out of 41 appointments

with salaries between Rs. 500 and Rs. 3,500 a month, only 4 are held by Indians, and these are on the lower rungs of the ladder; in the Telegraphs, out of 86 appointments with salaries between Rs. 500 and Rs. 3,000 a month, only 3 are held by Indians; in the Railways, out of 774 appointments with salaries between Rs. 500 and Rs. 3,500, only 10 are held by Indians. The official member for the Railways frankly avowed that Indians were not fit for the superior grades of service in his department. Thus do even high officials sometimes add insult to injury when they find no better defence for their favourite course.

This is not fulfilling the Parliamentary pledges, this is tantalising the Indian people. Lord Curzon realised this state of things, and throwing off the mask with characteristic boldness, gave the Indian people to understand that the Queen's Proclamation might be treated as an equivocal document, and that the bulk of the higher posts must be retained by Englishmen till the end of time. Lord Morley afterwards vigorously repudiated this pettifogging construction of the Royal pledge; but it must be confessed that Lord Curzon expressed the real sentiment of the Anglo-Indian community at large. He expressed the sentiment of the dominant class in its nakedness; but that sentiment sometimes appears in more respectable garbs. For instance, we are told that though Indians are very clever in passing examinations and are intelligent in many things, yet they are deficient in what is called 'character'; they lack certain mystic governing qualities which are the birthright of an Englishman; and that though they may do well enough as a superior order of clerks, or even as High Court judges, yet they are not quite fit for high executive and administrative offices. Now this word 'character' in the Anglo-Indian vocabulary covers a multitude of excuses for excluding Indians from the higher grades of the public service of their country, and when they claim any high posts, all sorts of possible and impossible conditions are considered necessary for their fitness for those posts. Only the other day Lord

MacDonnell objected to the appointment of an Indian to the Governor-General's Executive Council on the ground that there was no such Indian in all India in whom all India could repose perfect confidence. As if it were a self-evident truth that all India felt perfect confidence in every high British official! With reference to the qualifications demanded by some people of an ideal Anglo-Egyptian official, Lord Cromer relates an amusing anecdote in his book on "Modern Egypt" which illustrates my point. A lady once asked Madame de Stael to recommend a tutor for her boy. That tutor was to be a gentleman with perfect manners and a thorough knowledge of the world, a classical scholar and an accomplished linguist; he was to exercise supreme authority over his pupil, and at the same time he was to show such a degree of tact that his authority was to be unfelt; in fact, he was to possess almost every moral attribute and intellectual faculty and lastly he was to place all these qualities in the service of Madame de Stael's friend for a very low salary. Madame de Stael replied:

> My dear, I perfectly understand the sort of man you want, but I must tell you that if I find him I would marry him.

Now from what I have just said, it must not be understood that we do not appreciate what the Government has done for us in this respect in recent times. The appointment of two Indians to the Secretary of State's Council and an Indian to every Executive Council here was a great forward step in the right direction, which we owe entirely to Lord Morley's powerful advocacy and influence, backed up by Lord Minto, but which was most strongly opposed by the bureaucracy here and their powerful supporters in England. Lord Morley did indeed give effect to Queen Victoria's Proclamation, so far as it lay in him, and he has thereby done something to raise the character of British rule in this country. But we cannot always have a Lord Morley at the India Office and at the same time a Viceroy like Lord Minto. They did what two great and generous-hearted statesmen could do; but the real evil lies in the system under which Indians can

never fairly compete with Englishmen, and which the occasional efforts of exceptional statesmen cannot change, because it is supported by the vested interests of the most powerful body of Englishmen in India. There is only one way in which some change of a permanent character may be effected in the existing system and justice may be done to Indians, and that is to grant us the boon of "simultaneous examinations" for the Indian Civil Service.

This is an old grievance of the Indians. Sixty years ago the justice of this grievance was felt and admitted by the English statesmen of the day. In 1853, Lord Stanley (afterwards Earl of Derby) said in Parliament:

> He could not refrain from expressing his conviction that, in refusing to carry on examinations in India and in England —a thing that was easily practicable—the Government were, in fact, negativing that which they declared to be one of the principal objects of their Bill, and confining the Civil Service, as heretofore, to Englishmen. That result was unjust, and he believed it would be most pernicious.

In 1860, the Secretary of State appointed a Committee of five distinguished Anglo-Indians (all members of the India Council) to report as to how effect could be given to the Parliamentary pledges. And they recommended simultaneous examinations for the Civil Service, to be held in India and England. However, nothing further was done, and so nine years later, the Duke of Argyll, then Secretary of State for India, said in Parliament:

> If the only door of admission to the Civil Service of India is a competitive examination carried on in London, what chance or what possibility is there of natives acquiring that fair share in the administration of their own country which their education and ability would enable them to fulfil, and therefore entitle them to possess?

In 1893, the House of Commons adopted a resolution in favour of simultaneous examinations, which the Secretary of State sent to the Government of India for their opinion, laying down the condition:

That it is indispensable that an adequate number of the members of the Civil Service shall always be Europeans, and that no scheme would be admissible which does not fulfil that essential condition.

The Secretary of State's "essential conditions" furnished a sufficient excuse to the Government of India for reporting against the advisability of giving effect at all to the resolution of the House of Commons. And no English or Anglo-Indian statesman has touched that question since. Only the other day in the course of the debate on the Hon. Mr. Subba Rao's Resolution on the Public Service question, Mr. (now Sir Archdale) Earle, speaking for the Government, said that the Government of India could give him no encouragement in that respect.

Now, whatever excuse may be devised for the monopoly of the Indian Civil Service by Englishmen, to deny the boon of simultaneous examinations to India is virtually to reduce the Royal and Parliamentary pledges to a dead letter and tell them in so many words that however able and qualified they may be, they must remain content with such crumbs as may fall from the table of the ruling class; that although in the Indian States they may rise to the highest positions, yet under the British Government they must abandon that hope; that though to administer the country through Indian agency would be more economical, yet an expensive foreign agency must be maintained in the interest of race ascendancy. But this is an impossible system and must be reformed—the earlier the better for all concerned. The statesmen of other days foresaw the situation which has now arisen and told their countrymen how to meet it. Some 60 years ago that famous Anglo-Indian statesman, Mountstuart Elphinstone wrote as follows:

I conceive that the administration of all the departments of a great country by a small number of foreign visitors in a state of isolation, produced by a difference of religion, ideas and manners which cut them off from all intimate communication with the people, can never be contemplated as a permanent

state of things. I conceive also that the progress of education among the natives renders such a scheme impracticable.

Only the other day, while reviewing Sir H. Cotton's recently published book, Mr. Frederic Harrison remarked :

> The stock objection that Indians of requisite energy and sagacity, such as statesmanship demands, cannot be produced among these millions, is shown to be an obsolete prejudice. There is an ample store of able men to take the task of government into their hands if they were trusted. But the old bureaucratic prejudice bars the way.

Yes, it is the bureaucratic prejudice which stands in the way of our demand; it is the bureaucracy whose interests are threatened and who have always opposed the introduction of simultaneous examinations, because they know that it would seriously affect their monopoly in the higher grades of the Public Service.

The question of the employment of Indians in the higher grades of the Public Service is not a question of mere loaves and fishes, it is not a question which affects a very limited class of educated Indians only, but one which affects the whole Indian people, because it touches the sentiment of their national self-respect, and is intimately connected with their most legitimate ambitions and aspirations. Foreign rule is generally considered an evil, not only because it is materially disadvantageous to the ruled but because it hurts some of the noblest of human sentiments. It is disliked because the dominant class is allowed privileges which are denied to the subject races. If British rule in India is to be looked upon by the people not as an alien but a national government, differential treatment based upon distinctions of race must be abandoned and equal treatment accorded to all as we were promised by the Sovereign and Parliament. India feels the injustice of the present system—the inequality of treatment in the field of the Public Service. Nothing can convince the Indian that though he may be fit for the Prime Ministership of Hyderabad, he is unfit for a Lieutenant-Governorship or even a Chief Commissionership in British India. It is the bar sinister of race which is

responsible for our exclusion from the highest posts in our own country; and it is when viewed in this light that British rule, with all its ideals and generous professions, compare so unfavourably with Moghul rule in its palmiest days. They deceive themselves who think that the Indian demand in respect of the Public Service is the demand of a small section of the educated community in which the people are not interested; for no people, however servile or inert, willingly submit to political disabilities, and no foreign government can ever become really popular which emphasizes its foreign character by having a governing case of its own. In every country it is only a few who can expect to hold the highest offices; but the mere fact that these offices are open to all exercises a stimulating effect upon the national energies and supplies a most powerful impetus to progress.

"It is a very shallow view of the springs of political action in community," says Mill, "which thinks such things unimportant because the number of those in a position actually to profit by the concession might not be very considerable. That limited number would be composed precisely of those who have most moral power over the rest; and men are not so destitute of the sense of collective degradation as not to feel the withholding of an advantage from even one person, because of a circumstance which they all have in common with him, an affront to all."

It is absolutely necessary for the good of India that British rule should endure; but then it must base itself upon the genuine regard and affection of the Indian people, and the only way to win their genuine regard and affection is to make them know and feel that they are the equal subjects of the British Crown and enjoy to the full the rights and privileges of British citizenship. Shortsighted is that statesmanship which ignores this capital fact of the present situation. You may do everything with bayonets except sit upon them, said a great European statesman; and our rulers must know that the old India has passed or is fast passing away and a new India has arisen which has learnt their ideas and is inspired by their ideals, that the tidal wave of the new spirit which is transforming all Asia is passing over this country also, and that the claim of her

people to equal treatment in the Public Service can no longer be safely ignored. The age of pledges and professions is past; if Indian sentiment is to be conciliated, the good faith of our rulers must be attested by actual deeds.

HINDU AND MUSLIM UNIVERSITIES

Among the many important questions that have been prominently before the public and the Government, that of education on national lines has found expression in the schemes of the Hindu and Mahomedan universities, and that for mass education, in Mr. Gokhale's Elementary Education Bill. That education is one of the noblest gifts of England to India is generally admitted; but Lord Curzon evidently thought otherwise, and so he passed certain measures which had the effect of narrowing the area of higher education and making it more expensive. It came to be said in his time that Indians were over-educated, that education had turned their heads and that they had become so numerous that the Government did not know what to do with them. Lord Curzon's Universities Act excited wide-spread dissatisfaction both among Hindus and Mahomedans, but was strongly supported by the bureaucracy, and it became apparent to the people that the rulers of our day had different educational ideals from those which had inspired Bentinck and Macaulay. Thoughtful men of all communities have always felt the necessity of independent institutions which, while supplementing the efforts of Government to disseminate education, will supply the deficiencies of the present system and adapt it to India's particular conditions and requirements. It is in this view, I believe, that the Hindu and Muslim University schemes have been promulgated, and *pace* critics of the type of a learned judge of the Madras High Court, I feel sure we all have watched with admiration the noble efforts of the promoters of both the schemes, and while congratulating them on the magnificent response their appeals have evoked from their respective co-religionists, we wish them complete success and trust the Government will not only help them to make the Universities accomplished facts but

will allow them to be really independent non-official institutions. While at this I cannot pass over Mr. Justice Sankaran Nair's altogether unjust condemnation of the Hindu religion. Mr. Sankaran Nair is an able and independent man, and I believe that in what he said he was actuated by the best of motives. Nevertheless, he has been guilty of a most deplorable error and has brought baseless accusations against the Hindu religion as it has been preached and practised by the choicest spirits of our race from the dim dawn of history down to the present day—a religion which in spite of its many faults and aberrations produced a noble civilization and built up a social fabric that has stood firm and unshaken amid the wrecks of nations and the storms of fate. It is reckless writings like Mr. Nair's which are made use of by our political opponents who attack Hinduism in the columns of the *Times*, with the deliberate object of discrediting our political movement in the eyes of the British public.

THE ELEMENTARY EDUCATION BILL

While the universities movement is an indication of our national activity in the sphere of high education, the discussion started by Mr. Gokhale's Elementary Education Bill show that we are becoming alive to the importance of improving the mental condition of the masses. The charge is often brought against the educated class that they are indifferent to the well-being of the general community and care for nothing beyond the satisfaction of their own political ambition. Mr. Gokhale's Bill is a sufficient answer to that charge. Mr. Gokhale, with that political prescience and practical sagacity which stand out pre-eminent among his many and varied endowments, has raised a question which will never go to sleep again, and has thereby written his name in the history of his country. In one sense, the question of elementary education for India is an old one. So far back as 1854, the famous Education Dispatch of Sir Charles Wood impressed upon the Government of India the importance of the question and laid upon them the duty of educating the masses. The Education Commission of 1882 again emphasized the

importance of mass education. Some halting steps in that direction were taken from time to time by Government. Later on, something was done in Lord Curzon's time and a little more has been accomplished since. Still how little has been achieved—how much more remains to be done, would appear from certain figures cited by Mr. Gokhale in his speech on the introduction of his Bill in the Imperial Council. In India, according to the census of 1901, less than 6 per cent. of the whole population could read and write, while even in Russia the proportion of literates was 25 per cent. As regards attendance at school, last year in America 21 per cent. of the whole population were receiving elementary education; in Great Britain and Ireland, from 20 to 17 per cent.; in Japan 11 per cent.; in Russia between 4 and 5 per cent., while in India the proportion was 1·9 per cent. In most of the European countries elementary education is both compulsory and free; in India it is neither compulsory nor free. As regards the expenditure on elementary education in some of the countries referred to by Mr. Gokhale, it is interesting to observe that while in the United States of America the expenditure per head of the population is 16*s.*, in England and Wales 10*s.*, in Japan 1*s.* 2*d.*, and in Russia 7½*d.*, in India it is barely one penny. And the result of this parsimony in education and extravagance in the military and other departments is that for mental backwardness India is a bye-word among the nations of the world. It is to remedy this evil—to wipe away this stain—that Mr. Gokhale has brought in his Bill—a most modest and cautious measure when you consider how limited, tentative and hedged round with a number of safeguards against precipitate action it is, how careful of the prejudices and susceptibilities of the people and how moderate in its demand upon the public purse. The Bill is not a perfect measure, which perhaps no measure is, and may have to undergo several changes before it becomes law; but if we are to have elementary education for the masses, there is no escape from its two fundamental principles, compulsion and education rate. The principle of compulsion is suggested by the practical experience of the whole civilized world;

and no argument has yet convinced me that, with proper safeguards it is not equally applicable to India.

As regards the provisions for the levy of a special education rate, I for one agree with those who think that the whole liability for elementary education rests upon the shoulders of Government; but when the Government says it cannot afford the cost of such a measure, then the only course left open to us is to draw upon our own limited resources in the shape of a local education rate and ask the Government to contribute a certain proportion from its own exchequer. If we care for mass education—if we feel that we owe a duty to those who cannot help themselves—then we ought not to grudge a small local education rate, which will fall upon us no doubt, but which we should be prepared to bear in the cause of our own people.

But besides those who object to the principle of compulsion and those who object to free elementary education on financial grounds, there are some who object to it on social and political grounds. To those who are opposed to it because they dread the loss of their menial servants, and desire that millions of poor men may remain steeped in ignorance so that a few wealthy magnates may live in luxury, I have nothing to say; but I am surprised that even in some respectable English journals opposition has been offered to Mr. Gokhale's Bill on the ground that education would create political discontent among the masses and thus tend to disturb the even tenor of British rule in India. We are seriously told by these public instructors that the safety of British rule in India lies in the ignorance of its subject people and that their advance in knowledge and intelligence would make them disaffected towards it. On the contrary, we who are not so intelligent as these English journalists think that the economic and political changes of recent years make it more necessary than ever that the people should be educated, that when the basis of popular institutions has been laid in this country it has become of the utmost importance that the electorates should be intelligent and

instructed and that the only way to enable the masses to appreciate British rule is to communicate to them something of that knowledge which is the glory of Western civilization. Upon this point my answer is in the following words of Lord Cromer :

> It is on every ground of the highest importance that a sustained effort should be made to place elementary education in Egypt on a sound footing. The schoolmaster is abroad in the land. We may wish him well, but no one who is interested in the future of the country should blind himself to the fact that his successful advance carries with it certain unavoidable disadvantages. The process of manufacturing demagogues has, in fact, not only already begun but may be said to be well advanced. The intellectual phase through which India is now passing stands before the world as a warning that it is unwise, even if it be not dangerous, to create too wide a gap between the state of education of the higher and of the lowest classes in an Oriental country governed under the inspiration of a Western democracy. High education cannot and ought not to be checked or discouraged. The policy advocated by Macaulay is sound. Moreover, it is the only policy worthy of a civilized nation. But if it is to be carried out without danger to the State, the ignorance of the masses should be tempered *pari passu* with the intellectual advance of those who are destined to be their leaders. It is neither wise or just that the people should be left intellectually defenceless in the presence of the hare-brained and empirical projects which the political charlatan, himself but half-educated, will not fail to pour into their credulous ears. In this early part of the twentieth century there is no possible general remedy against the demagogue except that which consists in educating those who are his natural prey, to such an extent that they may, at all events, have some chance of discerning the imposture which but too often lurks beneath his perfervid eloquence and political quackery.

In spite of objections as I have just noticed, the Elementary Education Bill has met with a hearty response from the whole country. The Hindus are enthusiastic about it; and so are the Mahomedans with the exception of some familiar figures on the public stage. The Aga Khan, the recognised leader of the educated Muslim community, sounded the true note in his speech at the Mahomedan Educational Conference at Delhi which shows that he is even a more thorough-going advocate of compulsory and free primary education than any Hindu is.

"It is the duty of Government," he said, "to supply primary education to the masses which is beyond the means and scope of voluntary efforts in any civilized country. . . . I am also delighted that an enlightened public opinion has so unmistakably pronounced itself in favour of compulsory universal education. Gentlemen, believe me no country can ever flourish or make its mark as a nation as long as the principle of compulsion is absent. The colossal ignorance of the Indian masses militates against uniting them as a nation; and the ideal of a united nation is an ideal which we must constantly cherish."

And addressing his co-religionists, he said:

You stand to gain more by the carrying out of the principles of the Hon. Mr. Gokhale's Bill than any other section of the people in India, provided care is taken in the adjustment of details.

These are wise words, and I trust the Muslim League will take them to heart. An influential section of the Anglo-Indian press is also on our side upon this question, and the Government of India and His Majesty's Government are both sympathetic, as is amply demonstrated by the terms in which the Durbar grant of Rs. 50 lakhs for popular education was announced. Opposed to us are the Local Governments and the bulk of the Indian Civil Service; but in this respect they are only true to their time-honoured traditions, and if the decision of the Imperial Government depends altogether upon their advice, then we must not expect to get compulsory education for another 50 years. Speaking for myself, I may be allowed to say this, that I attach so much importance to this question that if all the recent reforms were placed on one side and free and compulsory primary education for the masses on the other, and I were asked to make my choice between them, I would not hesitate for a moment in choosing the latter, because I look upon it as the one agency which will lift up the whole nation to a higher level of intelligence and fit it to play its proper part in the civilization of the world.

OTHER QUESTIONS

There are some other questions which are important and pressing for solution; but I have taken up so much of

your time that I dare not even touch them. For instance, there is the question of the status of Indians in British Colonies—specially in South Africa, which is a most painful question when we consider how we have been treated in this matter by the Imperial Government itself, although we have every reason to express our gratitude to the Government of India for its services on our behalf. Again the question of the separation of executive and judicial functions has been before the Government for a quarter of a century, and only two years ago we were told that the Government was devising some means to give effect to that reform. But experience has taught us that it is extremely difficult to induce the official hens to produce eggs, and when it does produce any, it takes precious long time in hatching them. Lastly, there is the question of Police reform, which is most urgently needed, which has lately attracted the attention of the Government, and in respect of which I believe some legislation is in contemplation. The Police, while it affects the daily life of the people, is the weakest spot in the Indian administration, and yet it is curious that any criticism levelled against it excites the greatest resentment of the official class. We can never be too much thankful to Mr. Mackarness for his just exposure of our Police system, and although his pamphlet was proscribed by the Government—was this because it told the truth?—yet it called forth an amount of searching criticism which has at last opened the eyes of our rulers, and the very veiled and cautious statements of the present Under-Secretary of State show that though for 'reasons of State' he thought it his duty to denounce Mr. Mackarness, yet truth is beginning to prevail against official scoffings, and we trust that reforms on the lines suggested by him and other liberal-minded politicians will be undertaken. It is absolutely necessary that the confession of accused persons should not be recorded by any one excepting the trying magistrate under such conditions as shall absolutely exclude all Police influence. At least 50 per cent. of the political prosecutions would never have taken place if the Police had done their duty.

CONCLUSION

Gentlemen, this is a very rapid survey of the present political situation, as it strikes me, and I think it clearly shows that while the manifold blessings of British rule are undeniable, there are certain grievances which are equally undeniable and need redress. English education and a closer contact with the West have raised our intelligence and expanded our vision; the example of English enterprise has given us new ideals of citizenship and inspired us with new conceptions of national duties. A genuine craving for popular institutions is observable on all sides, and the whole country feels the vivifying touch of the spirit of nationalism, which lies at the bottom of what is called Indian unrest, and which in various forms and disguises pervades strife and inspires endeavour. And so the ideal of self-government within the Empire has come to be cherished by some of the best men of our generation, and with the co-operation of Englishmen they hope to realise it one day. For we must bear this in mind, that the destinies of India and England are now linked together, and that in order to succeed in our political struggles it is indispensable that the sympathies of the English people should be enlisted on our side. But above all, we must instruct and organise our own public opinion, which is often a slow and difficult work. In the pursuit of a high ideal we must not forget the difficulties that beset our path. Long and weary is the journey, said Burke, that lies before those who undertake to mould a people into the unity of a nation. Our agitation in order to be effective must be national not sectarian, persistent not spasmodic, directed by intelligence and wisdom and not impulsive, and reckless. Enthusiasm is good, and idealism is good, and even crying for the moon is sometimes good; and I for one sympathise with those who are called visionaries and dreamers; for I know that in every active and reforming body there is always an extreme wing that is not without its uses in great human movements. I know that moderation sometimes means indifference and caution timidity, and I hold that India needs bold and enthusiastic

characters—not men of pale hopes and middling expectations, but courageous natures, fanatics in the cause of their country—

> Whose breath is agitation,
> And whose life a storm whereon they ride.

But enthusiasm and idealism cannot achieve impossibilities. Human nature is conservative and national progress is slow of foot. First the blade, then the ear, and after that the corn in the ear—this is the law of nature. Self-Government, such as obtains in British Colonies, is a noble ideal, and we are perfectly justified in keeping that before our eyes; but is it attainable to-day or to-morrow or even in the lifetime of the present generation? Consider where we stand in the scale of civilization, when we have only 4 women and 18 men per thousand who are literate; when there are millions of our countrymen whom we look upon as "untouchables", when we have about a hundred thousand widows of less than five years, and caste rules still forbid sea-voyage, and Mr. Basu's Special Marriage Bill is condemned as a dangerous innovation; when many Hindus do not sufficiently realise the fact that there are 65 million Mahomedans whose interests and feelings have to be cared for and the Mahomedans are equally oblivious of the interests and feelings of 240 million Hindus—when this is the condition to which we have been brought by centuries of decay and degradation, to talk of a National Government for India to-day is to make ourselves the laughing-stock of the civilised world. Agitate for political rights by all means, but do not forget that the true salvation of India lies in the amelioration of its social and moral conditions.

Gentlemen, pardon me for speaking to you so frankly but I owe it to you and to myself to tell you what I feel in the innermost depth of my heart upon the general questions which are confronting us to-day. I am no pessimist; I recognise the difficulties of the high task which our duty to our Motherland has laid

upon us, but I am not discouraged or daunted by them. I have faith in the just and righteous instincts of the English people, and I have faith in the high destinies of my own race. We were a great people once; we shall be a great people again. Patience, courage, self-sacrifice are needed on our part; and wisdom, foresight, sympathy and faith in their own traditions on the part of our rulers; and I firmly believe that both are beginning to realise their duty and that the day will come—be it soon or late—when this period of suffering and strife shall come to an end, and India on the stepping-stones of her dead self, shall rise to higher stages of national existence.

Twenty-seventh Congress—Bankipore—1912.

RAO BAHADUR R. N. MUDHOLKAR

BROTHER-Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I am very grateful to you for the signal honour you have conferred upon me by electing me President of this year's session of the Indian National Congress. It is the highest dignity which an Indian can aspire to obtain at the hands of his countrymen. Deeply indebted as I am to you for the confidence and trust reposed in me, I depend upon your kind co-operation and indulgence to discharge satisfactorily the responsible work entrusted to me.

THE AIM OF THE CONGRESS

Brother-delegates, the sons of India have before them a high and mighty task which is as noble as it is arduous. Born and placed in a country on which Nature has showered her rich gifts bountifully and the inheritors of great civilizations, lofty ideals and stirring traditions, the Hindus, the Mahomedans, the Parsis, the Christians of this land have a mission as inspiring and as glorious as any that has moved ancient and modern nationalities to achieve feats of renown or conquests over mind. To create a nation by the fusion of what is jeeringly called a jumble of races, castes and creeds, to weld together communities which have often been in sharp antagonism to one another, to wipe off the memories of centuries of rivalry and hostility and reconcile conflicting aims and ideals, to develop unity and solidarity amongst them, to raise their intellectual power to the highest attainable point, to secure for them a position of equality and respect among the

nations of the world : this and nothing less is the work before them. And this and none other has been the object set before itself by the Congress.

The basic principles of the Congress, on the lines of which our work has been carried on these 27 years and which are embodied in the Congress creed, constitute a goal which, while it is the only one possible and attainable, is also elevating and inspiring to a high-souled people. The British rule is recognised by all rational and thoughtful persons to be a Providential dispensation, destined to contribute to the material, moral and political elevation of this land. It has brought about conditions which made a united India and an Indian nation possible. It has supplied the gaps and the deficiencies which existed in the Hindu and Mahomedan politics and in their political conceptions. It is affording the training, the trial and the probation necessary for the establishment of the representative form of government, the only one under which a self-respecting nation can consent to live. Subjects of the same Sovereign, governed by the same laws, living under the same administration, common interests, common disabilities and common responsibilities have generated a sense of unity and a feeling of brotherhood such as never existed before. Their minds expanded and their intellectual horizon widened by the study of the literature, history and political philosophy of the West, Indians have come to appreciate the higher political life developed in Great Britain and other Western countries and to long for its introduction in India. British subjects, they claim the full rights of British citizenship. Members of a world-wide Empire, they want to be placed on a footing of equality with the people of the most advanced parts of it.

This is our goal, and we aim at attaining it by constitutional procedure and by peaceful methods.

OUR IDEAL

This goal is set up for the purpose of attaining a great ideal. A political organisation though the Congress is, we

do not regard politics as everything, as the be-all and end-all of life. Political rights and privileges, political institutions, political power itself are only means to an end. They are useful only in that they facilitate the establishment of that higher, more harmonious, more perfected life in which men dedicate and consecrate themselves to the service of their fellow-creatures and the glory of God.

Brethren, the people of India have a great mission to fulfil, a great part to play in the progress of the world. The reconciliation of jarring creeds, the harmonising of all religions, the unification of all faiths, the spiritualization of life in which, in the language of the holy Bhagavad-Gita, every thought, every word, every deed ought to be consecrated to God, is the task assigned to us. And it is to enable us to effectually perform this sacred duty that we are striving for the establishment of a social organisation in which peace and order reign, which enjoys immunity from external trouble and aggression, in which knowledge and devotion flourish and in which love for one another and for the whole human race, aye, for all sentient things is the basis of life.

BEHAR

There is a peculiar appropriateness in directing our thoughts for a moment to the spiritual basis of our political work, the inner spring of our activities, on this occasion when in completing the fourth *Saptaka* (cycle of seven years) of its existence, the Congress has at the invitation of the leaders of Behar come to Pataliputra, the renowned capital of Magadha. A powerful kingdom from the Mahabharata times when the redoubtable Jarasandha reigned over it, and a mightier empire in the times of the Maurya Chandragupta, Bimbisara and Asoka, Behar's ancient eminence is placed on a still higher pedestal by its being the country which gave birth to Gautama and Mahavira, the land which sent to distant climes the light and messages of peace, of universal love, of universal compassion. And though the turn of the wheel of fortune

brought centuries of humbler condition, the constitution this year of Behar along with Orissa and Chota Nagpur into a province is an augury of the return of your former greatness and the forerunner of a higher fortune. Foremost among those who have been devoting themselves to unite in brotherly relations the Mahomedans and Hindus, you, men of Behar, have before you not only that great task, but the higher one of resuming the work of your forefathers to carry to all parts of this great continent a rejuvenated faith of universal fraternity and love.

MR. HUME

It is the belief in the loftiness of the mission of the Congress and faith in the great future of India which attracted to it the services and devotion of high-souled Englishmen like Sir William Wedderburn, the late Mr. Bradlaugh, Sir Henry Cotton, and of that great, good man Allan Octavian Hume. Brother-delegates, when we met last year this season, in Calcutta, we congratulated ourselves upon Mr. Hume being still left to us, and felicitated him upon the partial consummation of his desires and the accomplishment of the most important item of the Congress programme. He is now no more! The father, the founder of the Congress, he who worked for it day and night, winter and summer, through good repute and ill, to tend, to nourish the child of his affection, he who in the most critical and difficult period of its existence laboured for it as no other man did, has gone, and we all mourn his loss as that of a parent. It was my privilege to come into close and personal contact with him at the time when his energies were still vigorous. I witnessed not only the intense assiduity and application which he brought to bear upon his self-imposed task but saw every moment manifestations of the depth, the profoundity of his love and affection for India. To our work he applied his great faculties, his clear and penetrating vision and his literary talents with the whole-heartedness of a devotee. For us, he incurred the anger and hatred of men of his race, suffered obloquy

and contumely and ungrudgingly bore even persecution. Abandoning all thoughts of enjoying his well-earned repose after years of hard, conscientious official work and giving up his favourite scientific pursuits which had secured him a recognition from eminent savants, he devoted his disciplined mind and his energies unstintedly to the rearing of his child, even when he was visited with one of the greatest domestic calamities which can befall a man and his heart was bleeding with a great sorrow. Ladies and Gentlemen, it is very doubtful if the Congress plant would have been the hardy tree that it now is, if there had not been Mr. Hume to water and tend it in the years of its infancy and to protect it against the furious blasts of attacks and persecution. The progress of the reform movement in India and the victory it achieved within seven years of the founding of the Congress, were mainly due to the network of organisations brought into existence in this country under his guidance and the vigorous newspaper and platform campaign carried on in England by his efforts and those of his co-adjutors, Sir William Wedderburn, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and the late Mr. William Digby. When advancing years, persistent illness and domestic sorrows rendered him incapable of continuing his former work, his heart was still in India ; and oft from his sick-bed did he send stirring, warming, enlivening appeals and exhortations to cheer our drooping energies in the days of reaction and to rouse us into activity when we were slackening in our efforts.

Brethren, he was

> One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,
> Never doubted clouds would break,
> Never dreamed though right were worsted wrong would triumph,
> Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
> Sleep to wake.

Men like him and Sir William Wedderburn belong to all climes and to all countries. His was a pure, loving, saintly life, devoid of selfishness and pettiness. We owe him gratitude, affection, love, reverence. May his soul

attain that higher plane of elevation for which it was qualified by a life of meritorious deeds !

TRUE HUME MEMORIAL

The question of a suitable memorial to our departed great leader is engaging the attention of prominent Congressmen, and there is no doubt that Indians will not fail to testify their reverence and affection for him. His most permanent memorial, far more lasting than any work of bronze or marble or any architectural structure, will be the shrine erected in the tabernacle of the heart of a grateful and loving people, who will for ever cherish his memory, with or without a visible token, just as the memory of Moses or Aaron continues dear to Israelites even unto this day, thousands of years after their entry into the Promised Land. Gentlemen, in no better way can Congressmen and Indians of all shades of political opinion demonstrate their admiration and esteem for one who made such sacrifices for their good than by continuing the work of national unification of mental, moral and economic regeneration, and of the promotion of British and Indian unity.

In one respect, Mr. Hume was indeed more fortunate than Moses; for it was permitted to him not only to have a sight of the Promised Land but to see his people make entry therein and to witness that they had some taste of the milk and honey of political life. It is true we are still far away from the Holy City and cannot say when our nation will be vouchsafed the blessed privilege of the sight of the Holiest of the Holy and of entry therein. But sure as day follows night shall we attain this consummation of our highest desires, if we are but faithful to the great men who joined to found the Congress, adhere to the principles laid down by Hume, Wedderburn, Dadabhai, Ranade, Bonnerjee and follow the path marked out by them.

RECENT TROUBLES

Like the Israelites of old we too had our wanderings in the desert, our trials, our temptations, our doubts of the

goodness of the Lord, the revolt of some of our countrymen against His authority, their worship of the golden calf. But all that has passed away like a hideous nightmare, never to return we devoutly trust. It was indeed a dark period of storm and stress, when the distrust and resentment produced by the smothering of just and long cherished aspirations, by the open flouting by the head of the Indian Government of legitimate ideals, and the undisguised attempt to nullify Royal pledges and Parliamentary rights, while they filled the true friends of English and Indian union with grief and sorrow and produced deplorable aberrations among some unthinking persons and impatient spirits. To the deep gloom and uneasiness of the regime of reaction and the ascendancy of autocratic methods, when even hopeful and sanguine temperaments had fallen into dejection and despondency, succeeded an interval of suspense, when the mind trembled between alternate hopes and fears, anxious to find out whether the Liberal Party would prove true to its traditions, and whether the great philosopher-statesman whose words of wisdom had carried instruction and consolations to thousands, would give practical effect to the principles expounded by him. These times of tribulation, of anxiety, of suspense, have been followed by a happier period, when a substantial portion of our most important demand having been granted, winter has turned into spring under the beneficent rays of the sun of reform and conciliation.

THE NEW ERA

In the development of this policy of conciliation and reform, the year 1912 was as memorable as the year 1911. In continuance of that noble and wise policy which has won for His Majesty the abiding affection, gratitude, attachment and loyalty of the Indian people, and which found a fitting expression in the momentous announcements made at Delhi, His Majesty made, in the course of the functions and ceremonials held at Calcutta, declarations which not only created unbounded enthusiasm and rejoicings in the country at that time, but have planted

hopes eternal in the Indian breast. Replying to the address from the University of Calcutta, His Majesty said :

> Six years ago I sent from England to India a message of sympathy. To-day in India I give to India the watchword of hope. On every side I trace the signs and stirrings of new life. Education has given you hope ; and through better and higher education you will build up higher and better hopes.

Every utterance of His Majesty, his replies to public bodies, his valedictory speeches, his messages to the English nation, are instinct with loving sympathy for the people of India, deep solicitude for their welfare, and generous desire to promote their advancement in every sphere of life. He has bid us *Hope*, *Educate*, *Unite*. A more gracious, beneficent, loving advice could hardly be given.

It is a matter of grateful satisfaction to us that His Excellency Lord Hardinge is actuated by a similar spirit of genuine sympathy and generous desire for the welfare of the people under his charge, and that the policy of confidence and trust in the people is receiving greater and greater attention from the heads of the Provincial Governments.

TROUBLES OF TURKEY

Brother-delegates, before I proceed to touch upon those questions which demand our immediate consideration, I have on your behalf and of my humble self to give expression to the profound sorrow and sympathy which the Hindus and all non-Moslem Indians feel for our Moslem brethren in the great misfortune which has overtaken the Khalifate, and the struggle for existence which the Turkish Empire has to carry on against a powerful combination. When the political sky is overcast with dark and threatening clouds, it is not desirable for us, the subjects of a Power which is striving to preserve the strictest neutrality, to enter into the merits of the quarrel between the belligerent Powers, nor are we in a position to discuss them with adequate knowledge. But as staunch believers in the supremacy of the moral

law and upholders of the principle of peaceful evolution, this much I believe is permissible to us to say, that it is possible to satisfy the just and legitimate aspirations of the Christian Provinces of the Turkish Empire without destroying the existence of Turkey or subjecting her to the humiliating condition of powerlessness.

THE PROGRESS ACHIEVED

Brother-delegates, I now request your attention to the work which lies before us. The chief plank in the Congress platform has been and must continue to be the securing of steadily increasing association of the people in the work of administration. In the interests of India and England alike, our great aim is to make the British Government a National Government of the British Indian people composed of the Indian communities and the domiciled and resident Britons. The first stage of this great work has been achieved. In both the legislative and higher executive functions of Government, Indians have, by the constitutional reforms inaugurated in 1909, been accorded considerably greater participation and a higher position than before. The old Legislative Councils have been expanded, the number of additional members has been largely increased, the principle of election recognised and applied in no illiberal spirit, their powers and functions enlarged, their capacity to serve popular interests enhanced by extension of the right of interpellation, of moving of resolutions on subjects of public importance, of discussing the Financial Statements. Two new Provincial Legislative Councils with like powers have been created.

In the sphere of higher executive functions, our demand about the appointment of Indians in the Council of the Secretary of State, in the Executive Councils of the Governor-General and of Governors has been granted; and so has been that other claim of vital importance, the creation of Council Governments in other provinces. Bengal has got its Executive Council with an Indian member and so has the newly constituted Province of

Behar and Orissa. There seems every prospect of the United Provinces obtaining their desire soon.

In one respect the admission of Indians into the Executive Government is even a more momentous step than the expansion and reform of the Legislative Councils. In the case of these latter bodies what Lords Morley and Minto did was the extension and development of institutions which had been called into being 40 years ago. The association of Indians in the discharge of the highest executive functions was essentially a new thing, and after the studied limitations sought to be imposed by Lord Curzon upon Indian aspirations, it was very much like the introduction of a new principle. The strenuous attempts made to throw obstacles in the creation of Executive Councils and of admission of Indians therein, testify to the importance rightly attached to them by the statesmen and administrators of the Tory Party.

It is true that there are some serious defects and imperfections in the new constitutional reforms as carried out, and some of these drawbacks have caused considerable irritation and uneasiness. But it would be ungrateful to deny for a moment the beneficent character of these reforms as a whole, the potent power for good which they possess, their magical effect in restoring confidence and trust in British statesmanship and in placing on a solid foundation the people's hopes for the future.

You, Gentlemen, who know what the real thoughts and sentiments of the people are, are fully aware of the effect they produced in reviving the drooping spirits of the constitutional party, in checking the unwise utterances of impracticable dreamers, in bringing about a cessation of the revolutionary propaganda and anarchical misdeeds.

CHANGE IN SPIRIT

Over and above the actual reforms accomplished is the change—amounting almost to the birth of a new spirit—in the attitude of the official mind towards Indians and their

aspirations. There is greater insistence by responsible statesmen and administrators on trust and confidence in the people and on the necessity of consulting their opinions and wishes, of drawing them and the Government into closer bonds of co-operation and mutual esteem. Two significant facts call for special notice. Lord Minto's scheme of 1908 proposed non-official majorities in the Imperial and Provincial Councils; and though Lord Morley disallowed the proposal so far as it affected the Imperial Legislative Council, and the Regulations under the Councils Act of 1909 explicitly lay down that the number of non-official members elected and nominated in the Governor-General's Council shall not exceed the total number of officials in the Council, the facts that non-official majorities are allowed in the Provincial Councils, and that it was a Unionist Viceroy who recommended a non-official majority in the Imperial Legislative Council, go to strengthen our demand that the Legislative Councils should in the main consist of representatives of popular interests and views.

PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY

Even more significant is the statesmanlike position taken up by the Government of India in the celebrated para. 3 of the Despatch of the Government of India of 25th August, 1911. It says:

> It is certain that in the course of time, the just demands of Indians for a large share in the government of the country will have to be satisfied, and the question will be: how this devolution of power can be conceded without impairing the supreme authority of the Governor-General-in-Council. The only possible solution of the difficulty would appear to be, gradually to give the Provinces a large measure of self-government, until at last India would consist of a number of administrations autonomous in all provincial affairs with the Government of India above them all and possessing power to interfere in case of misgovernment, ordinarily restricting their function to matters of Imperial concern.

Now, Gentlemen, there is a close family resemblance between this goal and that advocated from this platform. It is true that Lord Crewe has tried to explain away the statement in the Government of India's Despatch and

to minimise its value. But his lieutenant, Mr. Montagu, one of the coming men of the Liberal Party, to whom on his visit to India we accorded a cordial greeting of welcome, has taken up a stand in his speech at Cambridge, at the end of February last, which is a distinct affirmation of the principle clearly enunciated in that noble Document. After taunting Lord Curzon with having no policy at all, he said :

> Where the difference lies is in this: that we have endeavoured to look ahead, to co-ordinate our changes in Bengal with the general lines of our future policy, which is stated now for the first time in the Government of India's despatch that has been published as a Parliamentary Paper. That statement shows the goal, the aim towards which we propose to work not immediately, not in a hurry, but gradually. . . . . At last and not too soon a Viceroy has had the courage to state the trend of British policy in India and the lines on which we intend to advance.

Say what over-cautious statesmen may, the profound significance of such a statement in an important State-document cannot be gainsaid. We have every reason to feel immensely strengthened and fortified by that declaration. It affords conclusive testimony that in asking for self-government under the British Supremacy, we are not "asking for the moon", and that even our present demands are not unpractical, our programme is not impracticable, our goal not illusory.

While on this subject, let us pay our tribute to the memory of one who is known to have taken a prominent part in the preparation of that despatch—one whom, in spite of a momentary misunderstanding, his Indian non-official colleagues in the Legislative Council had come to like and respect as a frank and good man, of large sympathies, liberal views and a wide outlook. Sir John Jenkins' sudden death under tragic circumstances, deeply mourned in this country, has deprived the cause of Indian constitutional reform of a sincere and staunch friend. We offer our sympathies to Lady Jenkins and her children.

The people of the Central Provinces and Berar owe a special debt of gratitude to him ; for, it was mainly owing

to the stand taken by him that that territory is about to get a Provincial Legislative Council.

Leaving aside an unprofitable, exegetical controversy and placing upon the words used their ordinary meaning, the correctness of the principle embodied in the paragraph and the necessity of giving gradual effect to that principle, are unquestionable. The great need of decentralisation has been pressed upon the Government of India from all sides, and by none more forcibly than by the members of the official hierarchy. The Decentralisation Commission was specially appointed to advise what devolution was to be effected. Surely such devolution is not to be carried out for concentrating the devolved powers in the hands of uncontrolled individuals. If delegation is to be real and substantially greater powers and a large measure of independence are to be given to Provincial Governments, it would not only be anomalous but hazardous and out of tune with the spirit of the new constitution, that these authorities should be absolute and unchecked. Not only will it be necessary to have Executive Councils with Indian members established for each Province, but the Legislative Councils will have to be granted larger powers, the number of non-official members therein increased, the composition of these bodies made more fully representative.

DEFECTS IN COUNCIL REGULATIONS

And this brings me to a consideration of what must be done to obtain the full benefits which the Indian Councils Act of 1909 and the Government of India Act of 1912, are capable of producing. The first thing we have to address ourselves to is the removal of the anomalies, the inequalities and the defects in the Council Regulations. These fall under the following heads :—

(*a*) Wrong methods adopted in the application of the principle of communal representation.

(*b*) Differential treatment and unequal privileges.

(*c*) Omission to extend the principle of representation to some important tracts.

(*d*) Faulty method of election adopted in certain cases.

As regards communal representation, the Congress has in view of existing circumstances recognised the expediency of adopting it; but we contend that the principle on which it is allowable being the desirability of granting representation to important minorities, effect has to be given to it as much in the case of the Hindus when they are in a minority, as has been done in the case of the Mahomedans. It is indeed urged with no little cogency and justice that, strictly speaking, there is no justification for granting special representation to Mahomedans in Provinces where they are in a majority. But personally I am not disposed to press this point and do not wish to raise any objection to my Mahomedan countrymen getting two or three members more than they would have under the principle of the representation of minorities. What is of greater moment is that representation has not been given as it ought to have been to the Hindu minority in the Punjab and in Sind. This anomaly should be removed. It is also worthy of consideration that the great Sikh community is entitled to have a member to represent it.

A highly objectionable feature of the present regulations in the matter of communal representation is the constitution of separate Mahomedan electorates. Gentlemen, in my opinion nothing is more calculated to retard the concord and harmony between Mahomedans and Hindus, to obstruct the intellectual and political advancement of the Mahomedans themselves, and the growth of a sturdy catholic public spirit and life amongst them than these water-tight compartments of separate electorates. The undesirability of these separate electorates is acknowledged by several of the leaders of the Mahomedan community, by some of those very persons who were elected to represent its interests in the Viceregal and Provincial Councils.

More objectionable than even separate electorates are the inequalities in the franchise. While the franchise is

in a wise and liberal spirit conferred upon the middle class Moslem landholders, traders, merchants, graduates and professional men, no similar right is extended to the corresponding classes of the non-Moslem communities. Under the revised regulations issued this year a very slight concession is made in Madras, but it is utterly inadequate as it does not go beyond the ex-members of local bodies and title-holders above the class of Rao Saheb. In this matter we do not seek to bring down the Mahomedan community to our level. We want the non-Moslem communities to be raised to theirs.

Another inequality and hardship which has to be rectified is about the representation of those parts of British India like the North-Western Frontier Provinces, Coorg and Ajmere-Merwara which are under the direct administration of the Governor-General. These latter should be made into one constituency and one non-official member should be allotted to them.

Then there is the hard case of those tracts and districts which do not form part of British India technically as not being possessed in full sovereignty, but yet being held on a permanent tenure with exclusive and plenary powers of administration vested in the British Government, are, for practical purposes, in no way distinguishable from territories held in fee-simple. These are also entitled to be represented in the Council of the country.

The removal of these inequalities and anomalies would necessitate a certain increase in the number—about 5 or 6—of non-official members and a corresponding addition to official members. This is not a very radical change and does not involve any deviation from accepted principles. It can by no means be called an organic change. Of course Parliamentary legislation is necessary, but it would only be in regard to the schedules.

Another matter is the substitution of direct election in place of indirect wherever the latter system still exists. The abolition of the machinery of electoral colleges, which is a clumsy and unsatisfactory device, is necessary for

securing the full benefit of the principle of election to the extent that it has been granted. There is absolutely no reason why the persons or bodies on whom the franchise is conferred should not themselves record their votes in favour of the candidate they prefer. The process of double distillation results on no rare occasions in the selection of a candidate put forward by a minority. This again is not an organic change. It does not even require a resort to Parliament. A change has to be made only in the Regulations and this is within the competence of the Government of India and the Secretary of State.

With these few changes and the removal of these defects, our Legislative Councils will be placed on a more satisfactory basis and the existing anomalies and inequalities will be removed. It is much to be regretted that in revising the regulations, these drawbacks and shortcomings were not removed or at any rate minimised. We must apply ourselves to free the new constitution from the anomalies and defects which disfigure it.

RESPONSIBILITY OF INDIANS

But after all, the success of the reformed Legislative Councils and the new type of Executive Councils depends more upon ourselves. It can be achieved only by insisting upon a high tone, solid output and real efficiency. Institutions in themselves can do little good if the spirit which should animate them is absent. Genuine interest in public affairs, burning zeal for the welfare of all classes, a high standard of work based on a thorough study of all the questions that call for consideration, freedom from bias, class prejudices and predilections are demanded more than ever. The work with which these Councils have to deal is by no means light, and as every day passes its volume and its complexity must increase. Members of the Legislative Council must be prepared to devote their whole time to it during the session and no inconsiderable portion all through the year. You want a Parliamentary form of Government, your Legislative Councils are even now Parliaments *in embryo*. It rests with your representatives to secure their full growth.

On the Indian members of the Executive Councils even a greater and a heavier responsibility rests. They have to bring to bear upon their task not only great study, application, thorough knowledge of facts, sound and calm judgment and scrupulous conscientiousness, but they must develop the quality of statesmanship, must cultivate a habitual wide outlook, acquire the faculty of looking at not only the present needs and requirements but those of the future as well, not only the immediate consequences but the ultimate ones also.

It is for you, Gentlemen, of the Congress, to keep your countrymen up to the mark both in the Executive and Legislative Councils, and this you can do only by yourselves studying minutely all public questions, examining them with knowledge in the Congress and in the meetings of Provincial Conferences, by keeping a watchful eye on the doings of the Executive and the deliberations of the Legislature.

EXTENSION OF COUNCIL GOVERNMENT

Along with the removal of the defects in the Legislative machinery, we have to work for the establishment of the council type of Government in all the major Provinces. There is reason to believe that the United Provinces will have an Executive Council with an Indian member within a short time. The turn of the Punjab and the Central Provinces must come next. The last taken in conjunction with Berar is as important a territory as the Punjab, and its administration should be vested in a Lieutenant-Governor with a Council.

GOVERNORS

Indeed some years hence Parliament will have to consider whether as in Madras, Bombay and Bengal, it is not desirable to place the administration of all these territories under a Governor in Council. This is not a question of the immediate present, however. But it is desirable to keep it in view, and to draw the attention of the Government and of the people to it. John Bright pointed out so far back as 1858 that that was the form of

Government which would have ultimately to be adopted. Larger powers and fuller independence to Provincial Goverments mean a higher type of administration. A freshness of mind, a position of detachment, a freedom from prejudices or predilections due to long residence or long connection with the services are considered necessary for the Viceroy and Governors of Presidencies. The same principle applies to the heads of the other Provinces.

INDIAN REPRESENTATIVES IN PARLIAMENT

But there is another reform of a more fundamental character to which I would invite the attention of the Congress, the country and the Government, and that is the representation of India in the House of Commons. This is no novel idea. After the decision that the Crown should take over the direct government of India was arrived at, and when the Government of India Bill No. 1 of 1858 was under consideration, the objection was taken by Mr. Disraeli, the leader of the Conservative Party in the House of Commons, to the scheme of Lord Palmerston's Government that no provision was made for the representation of the people of India in the Councils which were to be invested with the chief power. Later on in the year, when after the defeat of the Palmerston Ministry and the accession to power of the Derby-Disraeli Ministry, a new Bill, India Bill No. II, was brought in, Mr. Disraeli dwelt upon the desirability of having the representative principle applied to the Government of the country. He regretted that the unsettled state of the country did not admit of representation of the people in India itself, and all that could be done in the meantime was to approach as near to that form of government as the circumstances would permit. Indirect representation was proposed by giving the right of electing 4 members to the Indian Civil and Military Services and certain residents, and 5 mercantile members to the Parliamentary constituencies of London, Belfast, Liverpool, Manchester and Glasgow. Though the underlying principle was admitted to be good by all, the method devised was seen to be wrong and unsuitable. And in laughing out an ill-devised scheme the important

principle was abandoned. In a strain of impractical altruism it was said that every member of the House of Commons would regard himself as a member for India. How unreal in fact this assumption was has been demonstrated by the emptiness of the benches when the Indian Budget is laid on the table of the House of Commons or any Indian question is under consideration.

With the supreme power in regard to the Government of India vested in Parliament, the necessity of representation of Indian interests in the House of Commons has been perceived by many thoughtful people. In 1878, when one of the largest public meetings known in India was held in Bombay, to protest against the Licence tax, a petition for presentation to Parliament was adopted which among other things prayed that such representation might be granted, and that as a first step the privilege be conferred upon such important cities and centres of commerce as Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, etc., to elect a few members to the House of Commons. Several non-official Europeans took a prominent part in the proceedings of the day, and one of the leading spirits of the meeting was that redoubtable champion of British ascendancy, the late Mr. James Mackenzie Maclean, who later on sat for a number of years in the House of Commons on the Conservative side.

Pondicherry elects a member to the French Chamber and Goa to the Portuguese Parliament. With infinitely vaster interests to be protected, the claim of India for representation in the House of Commons cannot be called unreasonable. With Parliament as not merely the ultimate and final authority, but the actual directing and ordaining power, the demand for the small representation advocated in 1878 cannot be called untenable or chimerical.

Opposition is to be expected, but what reform has not been opposed and attacked? With the ever increasing number of Indian questions brought before Parliament, the justice of voicing the Indian view in the House of Commons cannot be gainsaid. All honour and grateful

thanks to those generous souls, who have during all these years championed the cause of India. But there can be no genuine, adequate and fully informed representation of the Indian view until India is given the chance of sending Indians, howsoever few, to the Supreme Council of the Empire. Nothing is better calculated to bind this country and England together in close union.

DECENTRALIZATION AND LOCAL BODIES

Valuable as are the institutions which deal with matters of Imperial and Provincial concern, and great as is the necessity of placing them on a satisfactory basis and increasing their efficiency and scope, equally great is the need for properly developing those institutions which deal with local and district concerns, of establishing a system which will give adequate effectiveness to popular voice in measures affecting such concerns, of associating the people more and more with the agents of the Government in the every-day matters of their communal life. The rise of India depends as much upon the proper working of local bodies as upon that of Legislative and Executive Councils or representation in Parliament. The greatness of the Mother of Parliaments had its origin in the Parish councils. The municipalities, the district boards, the sub-district boards, the village *Panchayats* are the foundation upon which alone the great superstructure of Representative Government which we long to rear can be based. These obvious truths and rudimentary political principles are at times overlooked and in a manner even denied by some of our own people, who pour ridicule and scorn upon these humbler institutions. We have to secure the widening of the powers and functions of these bodies and the preponderance of the elective element in them.

The Provincial Governments have, as a rule, not shown themselves very responsive to the demands of the Indians for a higher political status and not only did some of the Provincial Acts fail to give full effect to the principles laid down in Lord Ripon's resolution on Local Self-Government, but even such provisions as were embodied in those Acts were hedged with restrictions

which greatly curtailed the powers of local bodies; while in the decade of reaction which followed the resignation of the Rosebery Ministry, the constitution and the composition of such an important body as the Corporation of Calcutta were altered for the worse. We have now to work for the recovery of lost ground and for further advance in the direction of the effective popularisation of local bodies. Real decentralisation and devolution have to be secured. The proportion of elected members should be three-fourths in district and sub-district boards and in the municipalities of all large and progressive towns and not less than two-thirds anywhere. Their powers and functions should be increased, greater independence and greater freedom from petty interference secured to them; sub-district boards should be given real powers and not merely be the agents of the district boards. Every town should have its municipality; village *Panchayats* should be established in the larger villages and the smaller ones formed into unions. The association of the representatives of the people should be carried out only in regard to sanitation, education, the construction of village, town and district roads and buildings, and in the maintenance of markets, *serais* and pounds but in the preservation of law and order and in the performance of simple judicial functions. The reproach is often levelled against Indians that they are litigious and flood the courts with trivial disputes, civil and criminal. The most effective way of checking this is to establish conciliation boards and arbitration committees of the local bodies and to invest them with powers to try small civil and criminal cases. If the Government earnestly address themselves to the task, they can without impairing the efficiency of the administration, relieve highly paid officers of a vast amount of petty work which absorbs so much of the time of magistrates and civil judges. Such a devolution would also be a valuable training for the exercise of higher political privileges.

DIVISIONAL AND DISTRICT ADVISORY BOARDS

The devolution of important powers to Commissioners and heads of districts recommended by the Decentralisation

Commission, necessarily brings in its train the creation of divisional and district advisory boards, half the members at least of which should be elected. The Decentralisation Commission while recommending the holding of district conferences do not perceive the necessity of divisional or district advisory boards. Uphill though the task may be, we have to convince the Government of the necessity of such bodies, in view of the larger powers proposed to be vested in Commissioners and heads of districts. The need for such boards arises out of the same considerations which justify the creation of Legislative and Executive Councils, *viz.*, to give help to these representatives of Government with advice, with information of local needs and sentiments by conveying to them in a responsible manner the people's wishes, views and opinions. I for one am unable to understand the opposition to this demand. It is said that every district officer worth his place does consult and will continue to consult the men deserving to be consulted in his district, that it is undesirable that his discretion should be fettered as to whom to consult and when, and that he should not be restricted to seek the opinion and advice of only a selected few. There is evidently a misapprehension of the scope and purposes of the district and divisional advisory boards advocated. Nobody wishes to lay down restrictions on a Commissioner's or Collector's freedom to consult as many persons as he may be inclined to and as often as he might like. There is also no denial that a large majority of these officers at times do seek the opinion of representative men from amongst the people on important executive matters. But even men of prominence individually consulted may not fully see all the aspects of a question, and discussion with other representatives of different interests will afford greater material for judgment and a more responsible consideration. In a large number of cases, the people's selection would no doubt coincide with that of a well-informed and liberal-minded district officer, but even such an officer is not all-knowing. And even district officers and other high officers are after all human. They have not only their peculiar views and idiosyncrasies, their likes

and their dislikes; but the views or standards of no two men agree and where one officer would deem it a duty to consult the leading men of the place, another might consider that his own unassisted knowledge or intuition was a more infallible guide. What we seek is the establishment of a regular and certain system working with fair evenness at all times and securing due representation of all important interests in place of a fitful, varying, capricious practice.

INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND OTHER COLONIES

Passing from the constitutional programme to a subject which though it affects a comparatively small body of individuals, numbering about a couple of lakhs, is none the less of immense national importance and has roused deep feeling in this country, I would draw your attention to the unsatisfactory position of Indians in the self-governing British colonies. It is a dismal tale of harshness, of unfairness, of injustice. The situation is most acute and pitiable in South Africa. In that region, there is first the deplorable condition of the indentured labourers, who, beguiled by the specious representations of unscrupulous recruiters, have been enticed thousands of miles away from home into a service hardly distinguishable from slavery. On this platform and elsewhere have been recounted harrowing stories of their miserable condition and degrading surroundings. If I do not treat this subject with anything more than a passing notice, it is not from any want of sympathy for those unfortunate men, women and children, but because the recruitment of indentured labour is now prohibited and the system will disappear within a few years.

At present it is the status of free Indians and the treatment accorded to them in the colonies of Natal, the Transvaal and Orangia which are greatly exercising the minds of the Government and the people. In Orangia no Indian is allowed to enter except as a domestic servant, he cannot trade, he cannot hold a farm. In Natal, they are subjected to a special heavy impost of £3 per annum for every male above 16 and every female above 13, have been

deprived of the political franchise they possessed at one time and are threatened with the loss of the municipal franchise as well. In the Transvaal, they are subjected to serious disabilities and are not treated like civilized beings. The most elementary civil rights are denied to them. They cannot walk on foot-paths, they cannot travel in railway carriages used by the lowest of the European population, they are subjected to innumerable difficulties in carrying on peaceful trades, they are confined to dirty locations, their children cannot attend public schools, they are not allowed to hold landed property, they are treated worse than criminals. And it is not for any crime, for any defects of character or deficiency of morals, for any want of loyalty or for unwillingness to conform to laws that the British Indian is harassed and persecuted. When the British Government went to war with the Transvaal, one of the reasons assigned in justification of the step was the ill-treatment of the Indians. And now the plight of the Indians is even worse than what it was under the regime of President Kruger. Harsh laws, made harsher by the manner of their execution, have been enacted against them despite solemn promises. Even crooked devices have been adopted for sending out of the country persons already there, and entitled to be there. Our countrymen there under the leadership of that selfless patriot and philanthropist, Mr. Gandhi, have carried on a heroic struggle of passive resistance, against cruel laws which are a negation of justice, and the persecution to which these men and women have been subjected has intensified the deep resentment roused by the laws. In this matter, the Government of India are at one with us, and have been putting forth all the efforts they can. In fairness, it has also to be noticed that there is a considerable number of the respectable portion of the colonists who disapprove of the treatment accorded to Indians and sympathise with their demands for just and fair treatment. But neither they nor the British Government have yet succeeded in obtaining from the South African Union Government the small

modicum of humane and equitable consideration the Indians ask for.

It deserves to be borne in mind that our countrymen in that land who know how things stand there and are in the best position to judge what is practicable have come to the conviction that it will not do to take an impracticable stand. The principle that as citizens of the Empire Indians should not be subjected to discriminating treatment, if pushed to the extent of insisting upon free and unrestricted immigration, has no chance of being accepted by the Government or the people of the South African Union. They feel that they must recognise as practical politicians the desire of the colonists to keep that sub-continent essentially a white man's country. It is unprofitable to discuss whether the attitude of the colonists is in consonance with justice or duty to the Empire. They possess the fullest rights of self-government. No British Ministry will venture to coerce them. No Union Government can do anything against the wishes of the majority of the electors. Our countrymen in the sub-continent feel that if they stand up for an academic principle the position of Indians, already most serious, will become absolutely intolerable, and they might be practically driven out of the country. It is on the recognition of this that their leaders—the men who have fought their battles and suffered all manner of persecution—have been forced to the conclusion that a policy of compromise alone can prevent the disaster. What they therefore ask is :

First, that those already in that sub-continent should receive just, fair and humane treatment and be accorded the ordinary civil rights ; secondly, in regard to future immigration, there should be no special restrictions, no degrading requirements, devised solely for Indians or Asiatics and based on colour, race or creed ; thirdly, that due facilities be given for the admission of the teachers and religious instructors required by the resident Indian community ; and fourthly,

that Indian travellers visiting the country should not be subjected to special or humiliating restrictions.

We do not ask for free immigration. But the Indians who are there are entitled to protection and just consideration. The system of indentured labour was called into existence for the good of the Colonists of Natal. For the benefit of these same Colonists inducements were given for over a generation to the persons whose indentures had expired to remain as free labourers. In the wake of the indentured labourers followed the traders and shop-keepers who supplied their wants. These persons were allowed to settle in the sub-continent and to make it their home. A new population has come into existence, born and bred up there and knowing no other country. It would be cruel to turn them away bag and baggage, as some whites urge, or to treat them as helots. The prejudice against them is due as much to race exclusiveness and pride of colour as to trade jealousy. The situation is no doubt a complex, difficult and delicate one. Our illustrious countryman, the Hon'ble Mr. G. K. Gokhale, whose devotion to the country's cause is equalled by few and surpassed by none, has just returned from a visit to the sub-continent. His mission was to study the problem on the spot and to put forth his best efforts to bring about a better understanding and a better feeling between the two communities. The reception that was accorded to him by the Union Government and by a large body of Europeans of position in the sub-continent holds out the promise of a fair consideration. We must remember, however, that the great difficulty in arriving at a solution honourable, equitable and just to both sides, has not been the disinclination of the colonial statesmen to take a broad view of things, or absence of sympathy from men of refinement and culture. It is the selfishness and the prejudice of the masses which have to be overcome. The present good results achieved by our distinguished countryman will prove a most powerful factor in gradually mitigating that selfishness and prejudice. But the task of

the Imperial Government, of the Government of India and of the Indians here and in South Africa is by no means finished. Our countrymen in South Africa have still to continue their struggle and we, standing shoulder to shoulder with them, have to give help and succour to them and to cheer them, in their difficult work. In that struggle they and we have to show perseverance, tenacity of purpose, judgment and tact. We have truth and justice on our side. We take our stand on humanity. And, God willing, we shall succeed.

The question is a most vital one to us. For it is not only in South Africa that the bar sinister of colour is put against us; in distant Vancouver and in Australia the same policy of keeping us out on the ground of colour is followed. These methods have naturally roused great feeling in India. It behoves the British Government to put forth all its persuasiveness, its moral influence, nay, even such legal powers as it possesses, to bring about a change in the attitude of these colonies. The colonies are self-governing and no one dreams of suggesting coercion which, by the way, is impossible. But the resources of British statesmanship cannot have become so exhausted as to supply no moral force which shall open the eyes of the colonists and make them perceive that the contentment of India is a most important element in the maintenance of that Empire to which they themselves attach so much value.

POSITION OF INDIANS IN THE HIGHER SERVICES

The position of Indians in the Empire and the treatment accorded to them in the self-governing colonies or elsewhere, will in no small degree be determined by their political status here and their power to influence the affairs of Government. The scant consideration which is shown to our people by outsiders is only a reflex of the position that we hold in the country. Improvement in our political status among the nations of the world can only come when we have a potent voice in our legislatures and a commanding position in the executive machinery. This is one of the reasons why such immense importance has

been attached by the Congress and by the political associations of pre-Congress days to the larger and ever increasingly larger employment of Indians in the higher grades of the public services of the country. And it is not only our *amour-propre* and our dignity that are affected, but our very existence as a civilized community is involved in this question. It is not a mere matter of a few scores or hundreds of high appointments for the scions of the educated middle classes as the apologists of the European monopoly and some of our own men say, but it is one of the most vital things determining the present well-being and the future welfare of all the Indian communities—Hindus, Mahomedans, Parsis and Christians. Financial and economic considerations, the interests of good government and the necessity of securing the attachment of the people to the British rule, all support this demand.

The subject calls for special consideration and practical treatment at the present juncture, as within a few days from now the Royal Commission appointed to enquire into and report upon the enlistment for the civil services in India will commence its work. In March 1911, a resolution was moved in the Imperial Legislative Council by the Honourable Mr. N. Subba Rao, for the appointment of a Commission to enquire into the working of the existing system and to consider the deficiencies and defects therein. He presented his facts and his arguments with great cogency, skill and fairness, and he was supported by the majority of the non-official members of the Council. They relied on Parliamentary statutes, royal pledges and promises and declarations of responsible statesmen to show what the Indians were entitled to have, and quoted facts and figures from official publications to establish how inadequate was the effect given to those solemn assurances and the expectations which they raised. The representatives of the Government of India in the various departments in their replies did not controvert the facts, which they well could not; and the Hon'ble Mr. Earle (now Sir Archdale Earle), who wound up the debate on behalf of Government, admitted that

there was a *prima facie* case made out for an enquiry, but that the Government would make such an enquiry itself and opposed the appointment of the Commission proposed. In view of the position taken up by Government, our honourable friend recognised the inadvisability of pressing for a division and with the consent of his supporters withdrew his motion. Gentlemen, though Mr. Subba Rao and his colleagues who were working with him felt greatly disappointed at the time, they and the country have now every reason to feel satisfaction for what has happened; for, instead of a Commission appointed by the Government of India as then asked, we have a Royal Commission whose scope is wider and powers are larger. Here is a singularly valuable opportunity given to the advocates of Indian claims to substantiate their case, to prove their complaints about the defects and deficiencies of the existing system, and to suggest a practicable way for getting rid of them. The problem is no doubt a complex and difficult one like all great problems. There are conflicting claims and various considerations to be taken into account. But its solution is not beyond the resources of statesmanship, if certain well established principles are kept in view. We ourselves have to treat it in a responsible and practical manner.

Now, Gentlemen, there are some unquestionable facts and principles which are to be borne in mind. So far back as 1833, the principle on which the Government of India was to be carried on by the British people and the place that was to be accorded to Indians in the administration of their country were laid down by Parliament. That first Charter of the Indian people affirmed the eligibility of Indians for the highest offices under the Government. It laid down that there was to be no dominant caste or class in India. Twenty years later, when the Company's Charter was to be renewed, it was found that the Act had remained a dead letter under the system of patronage which then existed. The system of recruiting the Civil Service by nomination was abolished and the method of competitive examinations substituted for it. It was

perceived even then by the friends of India and by all who took an impartial view that, on account of the great difficulties, pecuniary and social, the opening for the entry of Indians was exceedingly small. There was, however, the consolation that an end was put to a vicious system and a small move made in the right direction. In 1858 came that great Charter, the memorable Proclamation of Queen Victoria, in which Her Majesty gave the most solemn assurances and promises to the people of India. That noble Document says:

> We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects and those obligations, by the blessing of the Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil.
>
> And it is our further will that, so for as may be, our subjects of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability and integrity, duly to discharge.

It was a new bright hope, but is yet to be duly fulfilled. In 1860 a Committee of the India Council was appointed to consider how effect was to be given to the Statute of 1833, which for 25 years had remained untranslated into practice. It unanimously recommended the holding of the competitive examination for the Civil Service simultaneously in England and in India. Gentlemen, it deserves to be for ever borne in mind that the generous principles of government laid down, the noble promises solemnly given, came voluntarily, out of a conviction of what was just and righteous, out of a statesmanlike recognition of what was necessary for the permanence of the British rule and for securing the attachment of the people of India to it.

THE CIVIL SERVICE QUESTION

The recommendation of the Committee of the India Council was not accepted by either the Liberal or the Conservative Government, but what was done for the purpose of giving effect in some measure to the Statute and the Queen's Proclamation, was first the institution of nine scholarships to enable natives of India to go to England,

and then later on, in 1870, the embodying of a provision in a Parliamentary Statute enabling the Governor-General in-Council to appoint natives of India of proved merit and ability to places reserved for the Civil Service by the Statute of 1861, without their being required to pass the competitive examination. Neither the Statute of 1833 nor the Proclamation of 1858 was ever approved by the protagonists of race ascendancy and the upholders of monopoly. The Statute of 1870 was liked even less by them. Every effort was made first to thwart the Act and then to minimise its operation; and it took nine years before the rules required for giving effect to it could be promulgated. They sanctioned the creation of what was called the Statutory Civil Service, reduced the number recruited by competitive examination in England by one-sixth, and directed them to be filled by appointments made in India of statutory natives of India. It was a partial and under the circumstances as then existed not a very inadequate recognition of the claims of Indians. But unfortunately the mode of appointment laid down carried with it the seeds of the downfall of that Service. It did not provide for the possession of any high educational qualifications, or great intellectual capacity and worth as requisite for appointment. And many of the first selections were unfortunate. Not many of the nominees could stand comparison with the picked body recruited by the process of competition. Those who disliked the admission of Indians to high offices began to clamour that the experiment had failed. Our own people seeing how their future prospects were imperilled called for the abolition of the Statutory Civil Service instead of asking for its being placed on a sounder basis as they should have done. Petitions were sent praying for the institution of simultaneous examinations. As might have been foreseen, the Statutory Civil Service was abolished but our prayer for simultnaeous examinations in England and in India was not granted.

In 1886 was appointed the Public Service Commission with the object it was stated in a grandiloquent style,

to devise a scheme which might reasonably be hoped to possess the necessary elements of finality and to do full justice to the claims of the natives of India to higher and more extensive employment in the public service. It raised high expectations but the results were disappointing. In regard to the examination for the Covenanted Civil Service, the only thing done was to raise the age limit from 19 to 23, which was bound to be done in the interest of English boys, but the main demand of representative Indians for a simultaneous examination was rejected. Not only this, but in regard to the rights given by the rules under the Statute of 1870, there was a distinct set-back.

The great merit of the system inaugurated by these rulers was that the members appointed thereunder were members of the Civil Service. Their salary may be ⅔ and they may be called S. C. S., but they ranked with the I. C. S. Both sections formed one service. Secondly, the rulers provided for the appointment thereunder, ordinarily of one man to every five recruited by open competition. The total number of appointments reserved for members of the Covenanted Civil Service is now 993, and out of these 165 would have been held by Indians appointed under the rules. In both matters we have lost ground. In 1878, Lord Lytton's Government proposed to meet the requirements of the Statute of 1870 by the creation of "a close native civil service", but Lord Cranbrook put his foot down and the proposal was negatived because it would have created an inferior service, and would not have carried out the intentions of the Statute. But this is precisely what has been done by the Public Service Commission whose appointment was heralded with such a flourish of trumpets. The Statutory Civil Service was abolished. The right granted by the Statute of 1870 is sought to be given effect to by first constituting an inferior service—the Provincial Civil Service, to be composed *mainly* of Indians.

To this service were thrown *open* some of the scheduled appointments numbering 93 when the rules were

sanctioned and now standing at 102 only. Under the rules of 1879, the Statutory Civilians held an equal status with the members of the Covenanted Civil Service recruited in England, and the highest appointments were open to them. Under the new system the Provincial Service men cannot rise to higher posts than those of District and Sessions Judges or District Magistrates and Collectors. The recommendations of the Commission were illiberal enough. Under the scheme as sanctioned, fifteen of the appointments proposed by them to be open to the Provincial Service, were taken away.

SIMULTANEOUS EXAMINATIONS

The position created by the recommendations of the Public Service Commission caused immense dissatisfaction. The Secretary of State's final orders on those recommendations were passed in 1892. In 1893, the friends of India in Parliament took up the matter and a resolution moved by Mr. Herbert Paul was passed by a majority of the House of Commons in favour of simultaneous examinations, though the Government of the day—a Liberal Government—took a definite stand against it. The resolution runs thus:

> That all Competitive Examinations heretofore held in England alone for appointments to the Civil Services of India shall henceforth be held simultaneously both in India and England, such examinations in both countries being identical in their nature and all who compete being finally classified in one list according to merit.

In regard to this resolution Mr. Russell, the Under-Secretary of State for India, stated later on in the Session that, though in his official capacity he had to oppose the resolution, the House of Commons having thought differently from the Government, "there was no disposition on the part of the Secretary of State for India or himself to thwart or defeat the effect of the vote of the House of Commons on that resolution". He then went on to say that they had asked the Government of India as to the way in which the resolution of the House of Commons

could best be carried out. The Prime Minister, Mr. Gladstone, said:

> The question is a very important one, and has received the careful consideration of Government. They have determined that the resolution of the House should be referred to the Government of India without delay and that there should be a prompt and careful examination of the subject by that Government who are instructed to say *in what mode the resolution could be carried into effect.*

On the other hand, as was to be expected, the Secretary of State's Council was up in arms against the resolution and the redoubtable Sir John Strachey, who had taken the most prominent part in devising Lord Lytton's scheme of 1878 of an inferior " close native civil service ", entered a vigorous protest against even the sending of the resolution to the Government of India for their views. Lord Kimberley, who was himself opposed to simultaneous examinations, sent a characteristic despatch. The first paragraph of the despatch asked the Government of India to inform the Secretary of State " in what mode in your opinion and under what conditions and limitations this resolution could be carried out into effect ". The second paragraph of the despatch said that the Government of India had full discretion as to the observations they might think fit to make on the resolution, and it was also stated in the third paragraph

> that it was indispensable that an adequate number of the members of the Civil Service shall always be Europeans, and that no scheme would be admissible which does not fulfil that essential condition.

The Despatch thus displays the action of opposing forces—of Mr. Gladstone's and Mr. Russell's desire to give loyal effect to the resolution and of the India Council's determination to thwart it. The inevitable result followed. The Local Governments in India, with the single, notable and creditable exception of the Government of Madras (and even there, there was a dissenting voice), emphatically pronounced against the resolution, said it was impossible to have simultaneous examinations, and boldly took up the stand that nothing

more could be granted to Indian aspirations than what had been already given to them by Lord Cross's orders on the recommendations of the Public Service Commission. The Government of India took up the same position, and eventually the Secretary of State consigned the resolution of the House of Commons to the waste paper basket. With the retirement of Mr. Gladstone from public life, there remained little chance of a more favourable issue. This is how matters stand at present.

Gentlemen, the situation is this: Parliamentary Statutes and the great Royal Proclamation, which authoritatively lay down the principles of Government, explicitly give to Indians the right to be

> freely and impartially admitted to offices in the public service the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability and integrity duly to discharge.

On the other hand several ministers and administrators, alarmed by these generous declarations, have been steadily seeking to minimise their application. Some of them have gone the length of calling the glorious Proclamation of 1858 "an impossible Charter" and have tried to treat it as a diplomatic document by playing upon the words "so far as may be"; the European Civil Service has been openly opposing its full application. The attitude of some at least of the responsible parties is well represented by that oft quoted naive though indiscreet confession of Lord Lytton:

> We all know that these claims and expectations never can or will be fulfilled. We had to choose between prohibiting them and cheating them, and we have chosen the least straightforward course.

I would here parenthetically remark that the words "deliberate and transparent subterfuges" Lord Lytton uses, cannot be applied to her late Majesty or such real statesmen as the authors of the Acts of 1833 and 1870 whose sincerity and that of some Viceroys also cannot be disputed. But even where Viceroys and Governors have, in all sincerity, expressed their sympathies with the demands of the Indian people for a larger

share in the higher appointments, they have as yet failed to do anything substantial against the powerful influence of the Services.

So far as we Indians are concerned, our case is simple. Equal laws for all, equality of opportunities to all and favour to none, is all we ask. Over and above the inherent justice of our claim, we take our stand on the great principles of wise statesmanship and the duty which lies on the British nation of loyally giving effect to the solemn pledges and promises of the Sovereign and of the Parliament. It would be a political blunder of the gravest kind to disappoint expectations which have been deliberately raised, when the conditions under which they can be satisfied have come into existence. We are willing to be weighed and judged by the same standard of mental and moral capacity, of physical endurance and high character, that may be laid down for Europeans.

Let us see what the case against simultaneous examinations is. The objections urged in 1893 were that—

1. There are practical difficulties of a serious character in introducing a system of simultaneous examinations.

2. It would be unfair to the people of the colonies like Canada, Australia, New Zealand, etc., to institute a simultaneous examination only in India.

3. Open competition is not the best way of selecting Indians for the higher ranks of the service. It may be necessary in Europe in order to check nepotism, but in this case nepotism is impossible. Probation by actual employment forms a competitive examination of the best kind. Competitive examinations in India would certainly have the effect of admitting a large number of competitors deficient in the qualifications necessary for the higher ranks of the service and whose birth and antecedents would not be such as to command the confidence or the good will of the classes for whose welfare they would be responsible;

on the other hand, it would exclude the most valuable and capable assistance which the British Government could obtain from the natives of India, *i.e.*, the Sikhs, Mahomedans and other races accustomed to rule and possessing exceptional strength of character, but deficient in literary education.

4. In order to ensure efficient government of the country, a minimum of European officials is indispensable. Such a minimum could not be maintained in the event of simultaneous examinations being held in this country.

5. It would be entirely out of the question to reduce the existing minimum of Europeans at the present time.

I shall deal with these objections seriatim.

The first objection has ceased to have any force now. The difficulty of which so much was made was about the *viva voce* examination. There is no *viva voce* examination now except the conversation test in French, German and Italian. The practical tests in regard to science can easily be carried out in Calcutta or Bombay, Madras or Allahabad.

The second argument cannot possibly be treated as serious, and the Government of Bombay of the day which laid great emphasis on it cannot be congratulated on the position it advanced. The self-governing colonies recruit their civil services within their own dominion. Not only is an Indian—and for the matter of that an Anglo-Indian —inadmissible there, but there are obstacles interposed to the very entry of Indians in these colonies. The Indian Civil Service is recruited for the benefit of India. Indians have a right of entry therein. The residents of the central portion of the empire have also claims as the responsibility for the Government lies on the centre of the imperial authority. Indians are eligible for the Home Civil Service. The colonies which exclude Indians do not participate in the administration of India. It is strange that such an objection was deemed proper.

As regards the third objection, it is not a little surprising that after the deliberate abolition of the system of nepotism and patronage in regard to the Indian Civil Service, the old untenable arguments should be urged in the case of Indians. Nearly sixty years ago, Macaulay dealt with them in his inimitable style; and not only have we his complete exposure of the case of upholders of monopoly and favouritism, but the experience of more than half a century has vindicated the wisdom of the principle of competition. As Lord Macaulay has shown with a lucidity of exposition and wealth of imagery peculiarly his own, men who have exhibited high literary or scientific talents have also made a mark in the domain of politics and administration. Those picked bodies—the Covenanted Civil Service and the Royal Engineers—are standing witnesses to this. It is to be deplored that men belonging to these distinguished Services should have descended to use language respecting educated men, which, as Lord Macaulay points out, would have better become the lips of Ensign Northerton or the Captain in Swift's poem:

> A scholard when first from his college broke loose
> Can hardly tell how to cry *boh* to a goose,
> Your Noveds, and Bluturchs, and Omurs, and stuff
> By George, they don't signify this pinch of snuff
> To give a young gentleman right education
> The army's the only good school in the nation
> My schoolmaster called me a dunce and a fool:
> But at cuffs I was always the cock of the school.

It does happen at times that men of high natural capacities, who have neglected their opportunities at school or college, attain to high eminence in life. These exceptions only prove that in youth and middle age can be rectified the mistakes of boyhood and lost opportunities made up. Another fallacy which underlies the argument is that high literary or scientific attainments are no proof of moral qualities. I emphatically deny the correctness of this proposition. No man can pass such a stiff and testing examination as the Civil Service Competitive Examination unless he possesses industry, patience, self-denial, self-control, sobriety and perseverance. Nor is there any justification for the assumption that tests about

the possession of character are to be dispensed with. It might be respectfully enquired, what tests as to possession of character have been applied in the case of those favoured persons who have been honoured by Local Governments with nomination to the Statutory or the Provincial Civil Service and other high first appointments. The conduct in school and college will be a fair guide. As to physical fitness, the same standard and the same guarantees as are laid down for those appearing for the examination in England can be insisted upon in the case of those appearing for the examination in India.

As to the plea about social possession and rank and about justice to the so-called martial races, it might be respectfully enquired whether those high authorities who put it forward mean to assert that the standard of the test of education, ability and integrity laid down in Queen Victoria's Proclamation is to be abandoned, and a new test based on high descent, as it is called, influential connections and race considerations to be substituted for it. How long are statesmen and the Imperial Government to sanction the peculiar view of some Anglo-Indian administrators that indifferent education and assiduous attention towards persons of official eminence, combined with connection with some historic or rich family are the guarantees of fitness for important Government posts? The excuse about possible injustice towards the Mahomedans can have no basis in fact when we see the immense strides made by that community in education and public life. With highly cultured Mahomedans adorning the learned professions, the High Court Benches and the Legislative and Executive Councils, the Secretary of State's Council and the Privy Council, it would be wrong to call the Mahomedan community a backward community. Assuming for the sake of argument that any important community does not find entry by the door of open competition and there are qualified individuals in that community of "proved merit and ability", the deficiency can be remedied by appointments under the Act of 1870.

Another wrong assumption on which the opposition to simultaneous examinations is based is that the persons who would, in the majority of cases, compete for the Civil Service would come from classes who in past times held no high political or official position and possess no great social status. This assumption is in direct variance with facts. Such a thing cannot be said of the Brahmins of the Deccan, nor can it be said of the Brahmins, Kayasthas or Baidyas of Bengal (the classes regarded with peculiar disfavour), for the majority of the Maharajas and Rajas, hereditary or otherwise, come from these classes.

After all, it is an utterly un-British position to take up. It is the dignity of the Government which is injured by the employment of such arguments.

The only argument which deserves serious consideration is about the unimpaired maintenance of the ascendancy of the British principles of Government, and preserving the high standard of efficiency and purity of administration, which is the distinctive feature of that Government. I would, with due deference, submit that this is raising an issue which does not at all arise. Nobody has even dreamt of questioning the supremacy of the British Parliament or the authority of the Government of India or the necessity of maintaining in full force the principles laid down by them. No good purpose is served by drawing a herring across the trail. The principles of government are determined by Parliament and the methods of administration by the British Ministry, or by the Government of India with the sanction of the Secretary of State, in accordance with those principles. It is impossible to conceive how those principles and those methods would be affected by the proportion of Natives of India in the Civil Service being 50 per cent., instead of about 18 as at present. One fact which is always impressed upon us is that the majority of judicial and executive officers, commencing with sub-district officers and magistrates, are Indians. Now if with one million and a quarter of Indians in Government service, the essentially British character of

the administration has not been affected, what basis is there for saying that danger would arise if out of 1,200 of the listed posts, even 600 are held by Indians instead of about 200 or 250, as under the present system? No district officer, not even a Commissioner can make any change in the principles of government or the methods of administration. The Mahomedan supremacy under Akbar was not affected by his appointing a Hindu as the Governor of a Province, another as a General in his army and a third as his Finance Minister. The State of Hyderabad makes no distinction between Mahomedans, Hindus, Parsis and Christians. And neither in the stormy days of the 18th century, nor in the more peaceful times of the 19th and 20th century was the position of the Nizam touched in the least by this equality of treatment.

In the debate which took place in the Imperial Legislative Council on the 17th of March 1911, on the Hon. Mr. Subba Rao's motion, the fear was expressed by the Hon. Mr. Earle, speaking on behalf of the Government of India that the institution of simultaneous examinations might lead to a lowering of educational qualifications, as the educational institutions in this country were not of the same high type as those in Great Britain, and Indians and Europeans who were not in a position to send their young relations to the English or Scotch Universities, would put them in the low kind of cramming establishments which would be sure to be opened. This fear again does not take account of the fact that high educational qualifications and intellectual attainments are secured by imposing exacting standards and having searching examinations. The resort to cramming or its discouragement entirely depends upon the nature of the standard and the character of the examination. Further, all chances of the rise of cramming establishments can be obviated by laying down attendance at recognised British and Indian Universities and Colleges as a condition of permission to compete.

Another argument to which the greatest weight is attached, and which is indeed regarded as an axiomatic

truth, is that to maintain the essentially British character of the administration and to keep British principles unimpaired, there must be a minimum of Europeans in the Civil Service. The number of appointments open to Indians cannot safely, it is said, be allowed to exceed a certain proportion; that the scheme sanctioned by Lord Cross in 1892, permits only a minimum of Europeans, and that the number of places open to Indians in India cannot now be increased without endangering the character of the administration. To this position also a cogent and, I believe, a conclusive answer can be given. Taking first the last point, that the proportion of one-sixth which is proposed to be worked up to cannot be allowed to be increased, it has to be observed that this proportion of one-sixth was what was laid down in 1879. It was one which was evidently considered sufficient in the state of things as it then existed. The Government of India's representative admitted in the debate of 1911 that the Government was in full sympathy with the aspirations of the Indians to a larger share in the administration. During the 33 years which has elapsed since 1879, education has made tremendous advance. The number of capable men has immensely increased. The proportion which held good at that time can obviously not hold good now. With the vastly large number of men of real education and culture a greater scope is necessary. The Government of Madras very properly pointed out in 1893 that one-third of the listed appointments could even then be thrown open to Indians and this was a view which the Hon. Mr. Garstin also—the dissenting Member of Council—agreed to. That Government further stated that the limit of one-third would, in course of time, have to be raised. The argument therefore that the limit of one-sixth cannot be exceeded will not stand.

But to go to the main point, we have to consider how far the theory can bear close examination that there must be an irreducible minimum of European officers in the Civil Service, if the essentially British character of the administration has to be maintained,

that such irreducible minimum has already been reached and that if simultaneous examinations are held in India and in England, such a large body of Indians and especially of Bengalees will be let in, that the very character of the administration will be seriously affected.

Now, gentlemen, I must point out that what is insisted upon for the preservation of the high English tone of the Government is the presence not of Englishmen but of Europeans. The entry of Frenchmen, Germans, Dutch, will not matter. They are foreigners. Their political traditions are different. At times the relations between the nations to which they belong and the British nation may be strained. But *they* can be depended upon to maintain the character of the administration all the same. There is even now intense bitterness between Irishmen and a large body of Englishmen. Irishmen are considered by these as unfit for Home Rule. But they are deemed quite fit to maintain the British principles in India. Indians on the other hand, who feel and believe that their very existence is entwined with maintenance of the British rule, who are saturated with nothing but the doctrines of English political philosophy, they cannot be sufficiently trusted and relied upon to work the principles they believe in! I have no fault to find with, not the least insinuation to make against the members of the non-English European communities in the service of the Government of India. All I am concerned in showing is the curious nature of the logic employed by the opponents of simultaneous examinations.

Does not the very statement of this case, the insistence merely on the presence of Europeans, mean that what is of the real essence is the unimpaired preservation of the British principles of Government, of British methods of administration. The individuals who have to do it is a matter of secondary importance, provided they have fully grasped those principles, caught their spirit, thoroughly understand and appreciate those methods. It is not disputed that this essential condition

is fulfilled by those Indians who entered the Civil Service through the competitive examination held in England. The high education which they receive and the personal knowledge which they obtain by residence in England, are deemed to achieve this result. Now, what is there to prevent the acquisition of the same high education, the same personal knowledge of English political and social life, by men appearing for the same examination held simultaneously in India, if these men after selection spend two years at an approved University or institution in the British Isles? What is required is that the superior agency in the administration possesses certain mental and moral qualifications and has come into contact with British institutions and society. The nationality of the individual is a matter of minor importance, so far as this aspect of the case goes. Then again, what is the justification for the assertion that if the competitive examination is held in India, along with the examination in England, the Indians would extensively oust the Britishers? The Englishmen who say so do grave injustice to the capacity of their countrymen. The Indians who succeeded in obtaining entry into the Civil Service through the English examination have been for the most part of exceptional calibre, and these men constitute a bare 5 per cent. of the successful candidates. If simultaneous examinations are instituted, another 5 or 7 per cent. from among the superior youth of India would probably be all that would succeed in getting in. Of the men who would get in by the Indian door some at least would be of European extraction pure or mixed. We can thus realise what is the real extent of the danger of which so much is made. Let us assume that the proportion of 5 Indians to 94 Britishers, shown by the present method, is so largely exceeded that as many as 3 Indians get in by the Indian door in addition to the one by the English door. That would only mean that by the method of simultaneous examinations there would be 20 Indians who would find entry in the Civil Service to 80 Britishers. Add to these 20 the 16 per cent., the maximum enlistment allowed by the rules under the Statute of 1870, there would be

only 36 Indians as against 64 Britishers, and of the 36 Indians some at least would be Statutory Indians of European descent. That would not be such an alarming proportion of Indians of pure descent as to seriously affect the fundamental character of the administration. The Government of Madras 20 years ago, regarded one-third Indians in the Civil Service as not an objectionable number.

The great thing to be jealously looked after is the purity and efficiency of the administration. Now, have not these essentials been kept unimpaired by Indian Magistrates, Collectors and District and Sessions Judges? There have been instances of districts where the Collector and District Magistrate was an Indian, the District and Sessions Judge was an Indian, the Superintendent of Police was an Indian, the Civil Surgeon and the Superintendent of the Central Jail was an Indian and nobody had any ground for doubting the purity of the Judicial administration and the efficiency and strength of the Executive administration.

I ask our Government, I ask every liberal-minded and impartial Englishman to consider the facts I have mentioned and then to say whether the system of simultaneous examinations is attended with the dangers attributed to it. It may result, and probably it will result, in some individual loss on a small scale to one class and a corresponding individual gain to the other. But, as Sir Dennis Fitz-Patrick frankly admitted, the interests of a couple of hundred families are not the matters to be taken into account. If the assurances lately given, of satisfying more fully the legitimate aspirations of Indians for larger employment in the higher branches of Public Service, are to be translated into practice, and they are to be fully and impartially admitted under the test of "education, ability and integrity," then the only safe way of doing so is by the method of competition. No other procedure can be adopted without serious disadvantages. Selection means more or less of favour and a lowering of standard. It brings in its train administrative inefficiency and deterioration of character—of both the dispenser of

patronage and of its recipient. The Government and people have to guard against this.

What we should urge before the Royal Commission is:

1. That recruitment to what is called the Indian or Imperial Service should be only by Competitive Examination held simultaneously in England and in India, those who compete being classified in one list and appointments given by strict order of merit.

2. That the candidates who are selected should be required to pass a period of probation and training of two years at one of the British Universities or approved educational institutions.

3. That the Statutory Civil Service as laid down by the rules of 1879 be revised; that half the appointments therein should be given to deserving members of the Subordinate Service, and half by first recruitments filled by Competitive Examination. The competitive test should be applied as much to first appointments under the Statute of 1870 as it is to the appointments under the Statute of 1861.

SCHEDULED APPOINTMENTS

I have dealt with only the question of principle, and have not gone into details, important though these are, as the time at my disposal does not allow this to be done, and I cannot make too great a demand upon your patience. But there is one head of this Civil Service question to which I shall make a very brief reference. And that is, what are the branches of the public administration for which the Covenanted Service should be recruited? My view clearly is that it should be recruited only for the requirements of the Executive branch of the general administration. The time has long since come for taking judicial appointments out of what are called the scheduled appointments. The Civil Service is, taken all in all, a fine body, of capable persons. But it was not recruited specially for judicial work. In fact executive administration is its special province. The system of seeking for

judges amongst its ranks had its origin in times, when outside that Service there were few men available qualified for the discharge of judicial functions. Things are otherwise now. We may even say that now there is far more legal knowledge and judicial capacity outside the Civil Service than within it, of course *exceptis excipiendis*. Apart from the question of legal knowledge and judicial training, the executive frame of mind is not the one suitable for the discharge of judicial functions. Promptness of action and quickness of despatch, so often required in executive work, are not exactly calculated to produce that habit of close examination and patient investigation without which a judge's work cannot be efficiently performed.

OTHER DEPARTMENTS

It was not only in the Civil Service that we lost ground by the action of the Public Service Commission. The differentiation into two distinct services—a superior and mainly European service and an inferior and mainly Indian service—which has been carried out in a manner similar to that in the Civil Service in almost all the other departments—Education, Public Works, Forest, Survey, Telegraphs, etc.,—is a loss which has resulted to Indians from that Commission. Before the Commission the Europeans and the Indians in these departments, holding similar posts, worked side by side on the same pay as comrades and with—at any rate theoretically—equal prospects of promotion. We now have a superior and favoured "European pen" as Sir Valentine Chirol aptly calls it and an inferior and ill-paid "Indian pen." The distinction is not based on the possession of any real higher merits, but merely on race. And you have the spectacle of a man of science whose eminence is acknowledged in Europe and America, Dr. P. C. Ray, languishing for years in the Provincial Service with absolutely no hope of entry into the superior service, manned by men not one of whom can bear even a remote comparison with him.

In the Public Works Department also, Indians have a similar grievance, intensified by the fact of its being

brought about by breaches of distinct promises. The inferior status created in 1892, was aggravated in 1908, and though the rules of 1912 have mitigated some of the more serious hardships, the objectionable principle remains intact. In one respect the position is even worse in this department than in the Government Civil Service. In the Imperial branch of the Public Works Department recruited in England by examination, only 10 per cent. of Indians are permitted.

Similarly unsatisfactory is the state of things in the Forest Department The treatment of Indians in the Civil Medical Department amounts almost to a scandal. Its injustice has been publicly exposed for years and though Lord Morley's instructions for remedying it were issued years ago, it remains practically unredressed. In the Telegraph Department the distinction of Europeans, Eurasians and "*natives*", is carried into the grades of masters and telegraphists even.

Want of time prevents me from quoting figures to show how few are the places held by Indians in the superior grades of the Public Service. They are startling but you who are well aware of the facts around you know how serious is the exclusion of Indians from higher appointments in all departments, and almost total exclusion in some, such as the Customs, the Company-managed Railways, etc.

Gentlemen, Indians cannot, will not submit to this. In the case of these other departments, even the specious plea urged in regard to the Indian Civil Service, that the majority of higher appointments in the Executive branch of the general administration must be held by Europeans to maintain the British ideals of government, has no application. Race and colour have nothing to do in Education, in the construction of Public Works, in Medical Relief, in Sanitation, in the conservation and working of Forests, in realising Customs dues and preventing smuggling, in making Surveys, in constructing and working Railways, in maintaining Telegraphic wires or sending or receiving

messages. We of the Congress have not asked, will never ask for high appointments being conferred on Indians merely because they are Indians. All we ask is that these places should go by desert and desert alone; and we protest most emphatically against the exclusion of Indians of even proved merit and ability. The competitive test is after all the only one available to us for *first appointments*. It is not ideally the best, it is not free from objections. But the system of selection has in every country, and in India itself, not only proved far more unsatisfactory, but has produced positively demoralising effects. Let the Government lay down as high a standard as it desires, impose the most searching test, insist upon the possession of physical, mental and moral capacity. We have no objection. We welcome them. But the door of race or class privileges and individual favouritism must be closed.

I devoutly trust that the enlightened members of the classes and communities who took up in 1886 and on subsequent occasions a hostile position against the competitive test, will, now that the conditions of the progress of all Indian communities are better understood and appreciated, abandon the former undignified reliance on preference and favour and take up that more manly and dignified stand on justice, which alone will secure to Hindus and Mahomedans a due share in the higher services of the country.

COMMISSIONED POSTS IN THE ARMY

The Royal Commission is empowered to deal only with the Civil Services. The question of admission of Indians to the commissioned ranks in the Army still remains where it was. The propriety—I would say the justice—of the step has often been admitted by responsible statesmen. And when some years ago the Imperial Cadet Corps was called into existence, in Lord Curzon's regime, great expectations were entertained that the scions of high families who were enrolled as Cadets would eventually be appointed as captains, majors and colonels. That hope has not been realised. There is a wide-spread belief that

Lord Kitchener of Khartoum, when he was Commander-in-Chief in India, favoured an advance in this direction, and that his views are also shared by His Excellency the present Commander-in-Chief. Independently of the views of these great authorities, it is very necessary that the claim of Indians to higher positions in the army should receive recognition and that a beginning should be made in appointing selected and qualified Indians as Commissioned Officers. Twenty-seven years have elapsed since his Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught as Commander in-Chief of the Bombay Army recommended the formation of an Indian Sandhurst, but no movement in that direction has yet been made.

OTHER QUESTIONS

Brother-delegates, I have treated in my address some only of the questions which are exercising the minds of the people. I selected those only which intimately concern the status of Indians and their position in the Administration. These constitute matters of principle on the due settlement of which depends the possibility of our further advance as a nation. They are the foundations and walls of the great edifice which has to be raised. There are several other matters of very great importance vitally affecting the material and moral progress of India, which demand your attention. Education in all its aspects and all its grades, commencing from mass education, the improvement of the system of judicial administration by the separation of judicial and executive functions and in other ways the purification of the machinery for preserving law and order, the development of the material resources of the country by the improvement of agriculture, and encouragement of industries, trade and commerce, reform of land laws, public health, wise administration of the national finances, are matters of the deepest import. If I have not dealt with them on this occasion, it is not because I do not realise their intimate bearing on individual and national well-being. They have received and must continue to receive close attention from the Congress. For dealing specifically with some of them, the sister

organisation of the Indian Industrial Conference has been called into being. During my quarter of a century's service in the Congress I have had opportunities of contributing my quota to their discussion according to my lights and capacities. It is not possible to discuss them within the limits of a single address, and even the most cursory observations on them will try the physical endurance and patience of the most sympathetic audience. On many of these questions the Government and the popular side are in agreement as to the object. There is difference of opinion as to the means, methods and pace of advance. Free exchange of views and a spirit of mutual accommodation will bring about eventual agreement. Our reformed Councils now supply a machinery the efficiency of which will become more and more manifest as time goes on. The generating power, however, is in the people, and this the Congress and other cognate public bodies must develop.

NECESSITY OF THE CONGRESS

To rouse popular interest, to keep it steady when roused, to give articulate expression to it, a net-work of organisations has to be established. Workers possessed of knowledge, ready to study facts, willing to make personal sacrifices are required. The leaders of the Congress have to devote greater attention to this matter than hitherto. It is said in some quarters that with the establishment of the Legislative Councils on a partially popular basis, the *raison d'etre* of the Congress has gone. This is a mistake. With the new Councils the necessity of a general Association for the country with subordinate provincial, district, sub-district, town and village committees is all the greater. The people's representatives in the Legislative Councils can rely for their credentials only upon the pronouncements made by the country. Their usefulness and power depend upon the existence of a well informed, sober and vigilant public opinion. It is the function of the Congress and of its subordinate associations to evolve such public opinion.

In connection with this I have a suggestion to put forth. Till very recently it was incumbent upon us to concentrate our main effort on the recognition of what might be called the basal principles and rudimentary rights of even a partially representative system of Government. With the expansion of the Legislative Councils, the introduction of the elective system therein, the awakening of the consciousness in Government that provincial autonomy has to be kept in view, the fuller admissions and greater desire manifested to accord larger scope to Indians in the higher branches of the public services, and the acknowledgment of the claim of Indians to equal and fair treatment as citizens of the Empire, much of the discussion of simple political truths which hitherto was unavoidable has become unnecessary. It is now the application and suitable extension as time goes on, of those principles and truths—the detailed treatment of administrative problems—that we have to address ourselves to. And for this a change in our methods and procedure is desirable. The Congress must now direct greater attention and more time to the practical treatment of such questions as imperial and provincial finances, the system of taxation, economy in expenditure; greater activity in matters of education, sanitation, medical relief, works of public utility, etc., the remodelling of the judicial machinery in consonance with the varying circumstances of each province, the correction of the defective working and the wrong system of recruitment complained of in the different departments, the removal of the grievances of landholders in temporarily settled tracts due to periodical revisions and short-term settlements, the adjustment of the relations between the various tenure-holders, the measures devised to prevent the expropriation of the cultivating classes by the non-cultivating ones, railway finance, public debt, management of treasury balances and reserve, the currency system, and so on. Most of these have more or less come before the Congress at one time or another. But under our rules of discussion and the numerous claims upon the one dozen or one dozen and a half hours

available for discussion, it was not possible to do anything more than to state a few general propositions and merely approach the fringe of practical examination. The time has arrived when fuller treatment and detailed consideration should be given by allotting at least two days for informed and practical discussion of three or four subjects each year by men who have studied them. The main speakers should be chosen beforehand and the time-limit might well be that laid down in the Imperial Council Regulations. I would ask the Congress to consider this matter. In my opinion the change is one which will enhance the value of our great institution.

The Congress has not to dissolve but to become more active, to put forth more steady energy, to pursue more vigorously its efforts to bring within its fold more and more people. National in its aims, objects and aspirations, the Congress must strive to bring on its rolls a larger and a yet larger number from the various races and communities whose home is India, aye, even of those who are sojourners here. Your faithful adherence to its great principles is already bearing fruit. Communities which either kept aloof or maintained an attitude of critical opposition are coming round. The All-India Moslem League promises to become an ally and a loyal supporter. Mr. Rowlandson, sometime President of the Eurasian and Anglo-Indian Association of South India, speaking to an Anglo-Indian gathering at Ootacamund some two months ago, while acknowledging the great work of the Congress, suggested a federation of all the different communities of India. And only the other day, the chief exponent of sober European opinion in this country said :—

> A long time must elapse before the Empire completely assimilates all the heterogeneous elements of which it is composed, but no one who keeps his eyes open to the tendencies discernible on all sides can doubt that the process is already in operation.

A homogeneous Indian nation has not yet become a fact, but we are on the high road to it. Those who

find comfort in dogmatically denying the possibility of such an accomplishment, evidently do not know what is going on in the country. When they talk of class and caste differences, of racial and religious antagonisms, of long-standing feuds, they forget the wars of the Saxons and the Danes, the gulf which existed for centuries between the Saxons and the Normans, the bitter feuds which were carried on by the English and the Scotch, the long-standing hostility between the Irish and the English and the intense hatred and irreconcilable differences which characterised the relations between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants. I do not ignore the very special and great difficulties which exist in the case of India. But we know what a tremendous change has come over the Hindu community, and how that most difficult problem of caste prejudices and social observances is being quietly and gradually solved. Our critics are our great friends and they do us a positive service when they remind us of the immense difficulty of our task.

Brother-delegates and countrymen, let us constantly bear in mind that there can be no real or solid political advance without social advance and moral and spiritual regeneration. So long as the masses remain steeped in ignorance and the depressed classes are regarded as untouchable, so long as the mothers of families and the mistresses of households are kept without knowledge in the seclusion of the *Purdah*, not capable of participating in intellectual pursuits or public matters, so long as class is divided against class, caste against caste, race against race, and clannishness and sectional selfishness sway the actions of the members of the different communities, so long as true brotherly feeling and devotion to duty do not become the main guiding principles of our life, so long shall our aspirations remain mere dreams. It is only when Indians become a virile nation whose intellectual powers and practical capacities are expanded by knowledge and training, amongst whom the moral virtues of truthfulness, courage, faithfulness, industry and perseverance

have been fully developed and whose whole life is dominated by patriotism and duty, it is only then that our beloved Motherland will become—

* * the land that freemen till,
That sober-suited freedom chose,
The land where girt with friends or foes,
A man may speak the thing he will.

A land of settled government,
A land of just and old renown,
Where freedom broadens slowly down,
From precedent to precedent.

Twenty-eighth Congress—Karachi—1913

HON. NAWAB SYED MOHAMMED

BROTHER-Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I thank you most heartily for the honour you have done me by unanimously electing me to preside over this great national assembly. I consider it is not merely an honour but a duty which every citizen owes to his country to respond cordially to any call which may be made upon him to assist in an undertaking which has for its object the advancement, welfare and happiness of his fellow-countrymen.

The Congress has from its very inception set before itself the ideal of a united Indian Nationality and has been consistently advocating the cause of the Indian people as a whole without being influenced by party or sectarian considerations incompatible with that high ideal. The changes that the country has undergone during the last one generation, that is, since this organisation came into existence, are immense and the Congress, I think, may well take credit for bringing about not a few of them. My predecessors have advocated reforms in the administration of the country for which they considered it was ripe, and it is my good fortune to preside at a time when some of the more important reforms have been carried out and are in working order. The concessions made to the Indian public opinion as represented by this Assembly are in no small measure due to the sympathetic consideration which it received at the hands of Lords Morley and Minto. The foresight and statesmanlike grasp of the problems affecting our country displayed by them at a critical time saved it

from drifting into a situation exremely disastrous and alarming, raised the reputation of British statesmanship higher than ever and earned for them the abiding gratitude of the people.

With the accomplishment of some of the more important reforms, it appears to me that this organisation has entered on a new phase of its existence which must be marked by greater practicality and directness of aim. In this view the position of your President is rendered more difficult, and I confidently look to your co-operation to lighten the task that devolves upon me. I propose to confine myself only to a few subjects which demand our immediate attention.

It has been said, of course, by some friendly critics of ours, that with the introduction of these necessary and much delayed reforms, the need for an organisation such as the Congress has ceased, inasmuch as the various enlarged Legislative Councils are representing the wants and requirements of the people to the Government and are exercising a real influence over the administration. I readily admit that the new Councils go a great way in that direction and are really taking a very useful share in the administration. But I emphatically differ from the view that the Congress has outlived its days. As I have said before, we have entered on a new phase which is bound to prove more useful and beneficial alike to the Rulers and the Ruled. There are many questions requiring settlement in which we are deeply interested and which can be dealt with only by such an organisation as this.

ROYAL MESSAGE

Gentlemen, fortunately for us our interests are placed by Providence under the fostering care of a benevolent monarch whose first concern is the happiness and well-being of his subjects. In reply to the address presented to His Imperial Majesty at Bombay, on the eve of his departure to England after the historical and ever-

memorable Coronation Durbar at Delhi, our beloved Sovereign exhorted us, his subjects, in these words :—

> We fervently trust that our visit may by God's grace conduce to the general good of the people of this great continent. Their interests and well-being will always be as near and as dear to me as those of the millions of my subjects in other quarters of the globe. It is a matter of intense satisfaction to me to realise how all classes and creeds have joined together in the true-hearted welcome which has been so universally accorded to us. Is it not possible that the same unity and concord may for the future govern the daily relations of their private and public life? The attainment of this would indeed be to us a happy outcome of our visit to India. To you, the representatives of Bombay, who have greeted us so warmly on our arrival and departure, I deliver this our message of loving farewell to the Indian Empire.

These are noble words and they have won our admiration and respect for His Majesty, and our hearts are filled with gratitude for such kindly sentiments. It is abundantly clear that His Majesty is fully conscious of the responsibilities of his exalted position and should therefore be rightly regarded as the "Shadow of God," on earth. When we are the subjects of the same Sovereign, are living in the same country which is our home, are governed by the same laws, are desirous of making progress in all walks of life and have the same aspirations, then, may I venture to ask what prevents us Muhammadans, Christians, Parsis, and Hindus of all classes from joining hands together for achieving the common object? It is my firm belief that our united and joint action will prove more advantageous and beneficial to ourselves than making an advance by divisions. Whatever progress we have been able to make, and I may say we have made remarkable progress during the last thirty years, is largely due to the progressive tendency of our Government and their sympathy with the wants and aspirations of the people. And we look forward to the liberal instincts of our Government for granting to us from time to time concessions, which we may claim that we deserve. It is a matter of common knowledge that the British Government are always desirous of lifting up the people under their charge, and if we show that we deserve

success by working on proper lines, "there is no height to which, under the aegis of the British Crown, we may not rise."

WELCOME RAPPROCHEMENT

In the eloquent address delivered by the late Mr. Budruddin Tyabjee as the President of the Third Congress held at Madras in 1887, he said :—

> It has been urged in derogation of our character as a representative national gathering, that one great and important community—the Mussulman Community—has kept aloof from the proceedings of the two last Congresses. Now, Gentlemen, this is only partially true, and applies to one particular part of India, and is moreover due to certain special, local and temporary causes.

These temporary causes alluded to by Mr. Tyabjee are now gradually disappearing with the progress of education and it is a happy sign of the advancing times that there is an increasing *rapprochement* between Hindus and Mussulmans—a *rapprochement* emphasised this year by the fact that the "All-India Muslim League," during its session held in Lucknow, has adopted the following resolution, *viz* :

> That the 'All-India Muslim League' places on record its firm belief that the future development and progress of the people of India depend on the harmonious working and co-operation of the various communities and hopes that leaders on both sides will periodically meet together to find a *modus operandi* for joint and concerted action in questions of public good.

Another resolution which the League has adopted defines its object as "the attainment under the aegis of the British Crown of a system of Self-Government suitable to India." I cordially welcome the spirit in which these resolutions are conceived, and I rejoice in the changed attitude which the Muslim League has adopted in its political course of action and in the happy and harmonious progress which it foreshadows for the Muhammadan and Hindu communities. My friend, the Hon'ble Mr. Muhammad Shafi, who presided at that session of the League, referring to this question in his interesting address, said :—

The adoption of the alternative proposal put forward by some of our friends that the League should set up Colonial form of Government in India as its ultimate goal is, in my opinion, inadmissible as well as politically unsound. The political conditions, internal and external, prevailing in the British Colonies have no analogy whatsoever with those obtaining in India and I am in entire accord with my friend the Hon'ble Mr. Jinnah in thinking that the adoption of any course other than the one proposed by the Council would be absolutely unwise. Moreover, for a political organisation in any country circumstanced as India is and more particularly when passing through a transitional period, the adoption of a definite form of Government as the ultimate goal of its ambitions is opposed to principles of practical statesmanship.

I need not pause to dwell on the criticism which is levelled at the ideal of the Colonial form of Self-Government adopted by the Congress and takes in lieu of it Self-Government suitable to India. At the same time I cannot pass on without pointing out that the term "Colonial form of Government" is sufficiently elastic and is in no way restrictive. Self-Government, as established in the various Colonies, is not on the same footing, but is based on different forms of constitution suitable to the conditions of each Colony and its position in relation to the Empire. Therefore, the ideal which the Congress adopted a few years ago after mature consideration and with the advice of its friends and supporters in England, was in my opinion a practical solution of the difficulties that were then confronting us. We ourselves knew the difficulties of adopting any definite ideal while the country was passing through a transition, and the term, as I have said before, covers every possible form of government which may be ultimately decided upon. If it is definite, it is in one respect only, in that it affirms and proclaims the acceptance of the unalterable and necessary condition of British supremacy. In my opinion both the ideals are identical and I do not find any substantial difference in them, but only a difference of language. There is a real concord in sentiment between the two communities and it goes without saying that no Colonial form of Self-Government can hold good in India which is not modified by and adjusted to the conditions of this country. We may depend upon it that the leaders of thought in India will not accept

an arrangement that falls short of their expectations and aspirations and, therefore, not suitable to their country. After all, it is a matter of detail and perhaps of academic interest. We are concerned with enunciating principles and are not and cannot be discussing details here at this stage. A genuine desire on the part of all concerned to solve the problems confronting us will remove all differences and misunderstandings. It is therefore eminently desirable that the leaders of both communities should come face to face to find a *modus operandi* approaching the questions vitally affecting our well-being in a spirit of conciliation and fraternal co-operation.

Gentlemen, I do not wish that our efforts should resemble that of a captain who goes with a few followers to explore an unknown part of the globe or one who climbs upon a certain peak in the solitude of the Himalayan region to discover its relative position with that of other hills. Our common sense teaches us that the entire population of the country composed of all sections, united and resolute, should raise itself from the depths of disunion and dissension, to the elevated plane of constitutional method for the purpose of representing our wants and requirements to the Government. My opinion is therefore emphatic that the existence of such an organization as this is absolutely necessary in the future as it has been in the past. In fact our political propaganda is about to receive that accession of strength which is so very essential to the achievement of the common ideal. For in the words of Mr. Syed Wazir Hasan :—

> The ideal of Self-Government which the All-India Muslim League has placed on its programme is an important step towards the formation of that great nationality for the building of which all Indians are aspiring.

I rejoice to see a conclusive proof that the members of the religious fraternity to which I belong have resolved not to live in a state of perpetual isolation from other communities, even though it may be " splendid isolation. " In support of this I repeat the words of

my friend, Mr. Syed Wazir Hasan "that the progress of their common motherland must depend on a hearty co-operation among all persons." I still more rejoice to find that it is not due to temporary or accidental causes that this new policy has been decided upon, but is the direct result of circumstances which exist and are incessantly working to remind them of higher conceptions of duty and patriotism.

POLICY OF "UNITE AND RULE"

Gentlemen, it is sometimes said that the policy of our Rulers is one of "divide and rule." But the observations of Mr. Montagu, in the course of his Indian Budget Speech in the House of Commons, in August last, clearly show that the present Government at any rate are anxious that harmony and co-operation should exist between the various races professing different religions in India, especially Hindus and Mussulmans. Our Under-Secretary of State observed :—

> I said something about the relations between the Mussulman and Hindu some years ago. I think it is possible to say something more to-day, because it is difficult for Indian national ideals to take any intelligible or any satisfactory form so long as the great Mussulman community stands apart from the rest of the Indian population. I am confident of the future. I believe that the Indian people of all races know fully well to-day that the desire and the intention of the Government, communicated to all its officers and understood by them, as that there should be complete harmony between all the races there. The maxim *divide et impera*—one of the most dangerous maxims—has no place in our text-book of statesmanship. I can state emphatically that, if the leaders of the Mussulman and Hindu communities could meet and settle amongst themselves some of the questions which from time to time arise out of and foster differences of opinion and tradition, they would find ready co-operation from the Government.

Happily for us, the policy of Government at present is one of unite and rule and it would be a great mistake on our part if we do not take advantage of it and utilize it to our full benefit ; for our doing so would not only conduce to the progress of our country but would be a solid contribution towards the stability of British Rule.

AN APPEAL

Gentlemen, I entirely agree with Mr. Syed Wazir Hasan when he says that Mussulmans were not conscious of Indian politics because of their backwardness in education and "when once the two communities shared the same temper as regards Western education, and the educational disparity between them was removed, national unity would be assured." I feel I cannot conclude my observations on this all-important question without referring to the appeal which my friend Mr. Wazir Hasan so eloquently and earnestly made to his Hindu fellow-countrymen to lend every assistance they could to the Muslim community. He appealed not only to their magnanimity but also to their political capacity to remove the existing educational disparity which stood in the way of unity and progress. I desire to associate myself most cordially with this appeal and I feel sure that my Hindu brethren will heartily reciprocate and respond to it by acting up to the sentiment conveyed by it. Indeed they have given manifest proof of this disposition by their cordial and ready sympathy with our efforts to give succour to our wounded and distressed fellow-religionists in the late Balkan War. If this spirit of co-operative and mutual good-will is maintained and steadily promoted, the day should be near at hand when the two sister communities will be found working shoulder to shoulder for the cause of their common motherland and towards the realisation of their national destiny.

INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Gentlemen, the foremost question that is just now agitating the public mind in this country is the question of our brethren in South Africa. The tale of woe that has been reaching us from there, since the Boer country became part of the British Empire, is really heart-rending and that the responsible British statesmen should have been so far unable to do anything by way of attempting a settlement fills us with profound sorrow, almost with despair. We know the hardships to which our fellow-countrymen are subjected and we cannot pay a fitting

tribute in words to the courageous manner in which they are enduring those hardships; for, they are confident that British justice and sense of fair-play will ultimately prevail. Gentlemen, this unfortunate question has assumed an acute form and reached a stage where we have to pause and ask, whether we are not British subjects. The treatment accorded to Indians clearly shows that the Colonists take it for granted that we are not. At any rate, they have so far failed to recognise the claim of the Indians to consideration as British subjects. The war with the Transvaal was undertaken mainly, if not solely, on the ground of ill-treatment accorded to the British Indian subjects and it is to be greatly deplored that their position should have become much worse after the incorporation of the country into the world-renowned British Empire than it was ever before. May I ask in your name that, when the object with which that costly war was undertaken is not gained, where is the justification for it? I have the authority on this point of no less a person than the Marquis of Lansdowne who was Minister for War when the conflict began and was well-qualified to make a pronouncement on the situation by reason of his having been the Viceroy of India previously. Lord Lansdowne, speaking at Sheffield in 1899, said :—

> A considerable number of the Queen's Indian subjects are to be found in the Transvaal, and among the many misdeeds of the South African Republic, I do not know that any fills me with more indignation than its treatment of these Indians. And the harm is not confined to the sufferer on the spot; for what do you imagine would be the effect produced in India when those poor people return to their country to report to their friends that the Government of the Empress, so mighty and irresistible in India, with its population of three hundred millions, is powerless to secure redress at the hands of a small South African State?

We cannot be too thankful to Lord Ampthill who has taken up our cause in South Africa in right earnest. His sympathy for the people of this country which he uniformly manifested during his term of Governorship in Madras has endeared him to all of us. And as a very large number of immigrants go from the Southern Presidency, it is but fitting that his Lordship should raise his voice in defence

of the rights of those whom he had governed with sympathy and benevolence. Lord Ampthill, referring to the speech of Lord Lansdowne, aptly observes :

Those were far-sighted and prophetic words, for at that time India was quite unconscious of the indignity, and it is only after the lapse of a decade that we have seen 'the effect produced in India.'

The views expressed in 1899 by Lord Selborne, who afterwards became High Commissioner at the Cape, were no less emphatic than those of Lord Lansdowne and I make no apology for repeating them here :

"Was it or was it not," asked Lord Selborne, "our duty to see that our dusky fellow-subjects in the Transvaal where they had a perfect right to go, should be treated as the Queen in our name had promised they should be treated ? If they agreed with him and admitted that these were questions which we had to answer as trustees before our fellow-countrymen and before history, then they would agree with him also that the path of duty was to be ruled not by sentiment, but by plain facts. We were trustees for our brothers all over the world. Trustees also for our fellow-subjects of different races and different colours. For all those and the unborn children of these. Therefore, the test we had to apply in an emergency like this was the simple test of duty. Was it or was it not our duty to see that the rights and the future interests of those he had named should be maintained? Was the British Government going to make its name respected and to have the pledges given by it faithfully observed ? Was it going to see that the British subject wherever he went all over the world, whether he were white or black was to have the rights which his Queen had secured for him ?"

Far from any indications appearing that their lot would, in a measurable distance of time, be made less intolerable to them, they are being subjected in an ever-increasing degree to fresh disabilities and indignities such as are traceable clearly to the inebriation of the Boer mind caused by a sudden acquisition of independence and power. Apart from higher considerations of justice, fairness and humanity, the consideration of Imperial interests, as to how their attitude and conduct towards the Indian subjects of His Majesty will affect the prestige of the Empire to which the Boer as well as the Indian owes allegiance is deliberately disregarded by the Union Government. The fate of one hundred and fifty thousands of our brethren and

countrymen settled in South Africa cannot be a matter of indifference to us, as I am sure it cannot be to our Rulers. The heroic struggle that they are carrying on against overwhelming odds evokes our heart felt sympathy for them and our deepest indignation against their oppressors. But, Gentlemen, what could our sympathy and indignation do in this situation? We can send, as indeed we are already sending so liberally, pecuniary relief to the oppressed, but we cannot restrain the hand that oppresses. It is for the Imperial Government to step in and alter the course of things in favour of our brethren. We have had any amount of expressions of sympathy, of encouragement and of hope, but no prospect of action is yet within our sight. The spectacle of a world-wide Empire embracing about 500 millions of people as its subjects, being powerless to restrain an irresponsible Colony is not only unedifying in the extreme but is incomprehensible and causes dismay to the Indian mind. The position is now vastly worse than before, not merely from the point of view of the increasing disabilities and the intensity of suffering, but from the point of view of their moral effect. In the days of the Boer Government the Indian settlers had the feeling that their wrongs were due to an unjust and unsympathetic foreign State which only needed to be brought to the notice of their own Government to be remedied. But to-day they find the Imperial Government standing by while blow after blow is deliberately aimed at them with terrible precision and effect. This indifference has aggravated the situation and has roused bitter feelings between two countries of the Empire and is certainly derogatory to the high character of British statesmanship. Not only that, it leads one to think that this indifference in effect encourages the South African Union in the belief that their mistaken policy has the support of the Government at Home.

It was Lord Morley who used for the first time in reference to Indians, that happy phrase "The King's equal subjects," on a memorable occasion, and later on diagnosed

the South African troubles as concerned with the "bar sinister." But by a curious irony of fate Lord Morley himself was a member of the Liberal Government which granted Self-Government to South Africa. It is in the highest degree surprising that the Liberal Government did not then bestow even a thought on the condition of thousands of Indian settlers there, and did not reserve to themselves an express power of interference when an emergency arose in the broad interests of the Empire. It has been suggested in some quarters that a friendly conference of the representatives of India, England and South Africa might be held in London in order to discuss the situation and arrive at a satisfactory solution of this problem. But, Gentlemen, I have no faith in such a conference. I believe the time has come when we have to ignore the South African Union and look up to the British Government and appeal to them for intercession on our behalf. I say that we should ignore the Union, for the simple reason that the Boers will never accept our claims for better treatment, because they are convinced that the war was mainly undertaken, and have already shown, for the sake of Indian settlers and that these have been the primary cause of the loss of their former independence. The British Government are responsible for the present difficulties which they could have easily foreseen and avoided by imposing conditions regarding the rights of Indian settlers at the time of granting Self-Government to South Africa. It is therefore that I say, that we should look up to them and make an earnest appeal to them. It is a pity that the Parliament had no hand in the matter; otherwise, I am sure our friends in Parliament would have raised their voice in support of our rights. I have more faith, I confess, in retaliatory measures such as the placing of an embargo on the importation of coal from Natal into this country, and the closing of the doors of competition for the Civil Service against the South African Whites. It seems to me that these are the only weapons at present available and the Government of India should lose no time in making use of

them. I am aware that these measures have the disadvantage of being merely irritating without being directly effective or inflicting any real disability on the Colonists. But their moral effect would, I am convinced, be very great on our people and will not be altogether lost on the Union Government. By having recourse to these retaliatory measures our Government would be showing before the whole world that they are in earnest and would not tolerate the ill-treatment of Indian subjects of His Majesty in any part of the Empire. We have to advocate retaliatory measures because we have been driven to do so, much against our own will. We, however, hope that the resources of representation are not yet exhausted and that the Imperial Government have not yet done their utmost to secure justice for our countrymen. While recognising that their position is one of great difficulty in view of Colonial autonomy, I would at the same time point out that the present Liberal Government have claimed great credit for unifying South Africa as a triumph in that they have applied liberal principles in their Colonial policy, and it is inconceivable that liberal principles in practice can, under any circumstances, involve injustice and oppression.

Gentlemen, at a time when the Indian sky was overcast with the darkest clouds of anxiety and grief for the sufferings of our countrymen in South Africa, H. E. the Viceroy made a pronouncement at Madras which has given immense satisfaction to the people of this country. In the course of his reply to the addresses of welcome presented by the Mahajana Sabha and the Madras Provincial Congress Committee, His Excellency observed :

Recently, your compatriots in South Africa have taken matters into their own hands by organising what is called passive resistance to laws which they consider invidious and unjust—an opinion which we who watch their struggles from afar cannot but share. They have violated, as they intended to violate, those laws, with full knowledge of the penalties involved, and ready with all courage and patience to endure those penalties. In all this they have the sympathy of India—deep and burning—and not only of India, but

of all those who like myself, without being Indians themselves, have feelings of sympathy for the people of this country.

We are extremely grateful to our popular Viceroy who has gauged the feeling in the country in the right manner and has given expression to his own sympathy with the sufferers who are engaged in the present struggle. The *communique* recently issued by the Government of India clearly shows that the matter is receiving their earnest attention and they are pressing the Secretary of State for an independent enquiry into the allegations of brutal treatment. I can say without any fear of contradiction that by taking up such an attitude His Excellency has rendered a signal service to the cause of the Empire.

Gentlemen, it was only the other day that His Excellency Lord Hardinge after the unfortunate occurrence at Cawnpore, went to that city like an angel of peace and gave satisfaction and contentment to the inhabitants of Cawnpore. This was a proof of His Excellency's noble-mindedness and in keeping with his reputation as a statesman of the first rank. The way in which our beloved Viceroy has identified himself with the Indian side of the South African question by his honest, sincere and courageous declaration, calls for the strongest support from us, in all his endeavours for doing justice to the millions committed to his charge. May he long live to continue to take interest in our affairs!

His Excellency Lord Hardinge with the true instincts of a great statesman rightly said in Madras that nothing but an impartial enquiry in which Indian interests are fully represented will satisfy the Indian people. What has now been done by the Union Government shows how little regard they have for the feelings of Indians and of those who stand by them in this matter. A domestic court of enquiry composed purely of South African settlers has been constituted to enquire into Indian grievances. I do not wish to say anything against the gentlemen who compose this tribunal. They are no doubt estimable men, but they do not and cannot understand our point of view; they are bred up in

traditions which lead them to think that we have no rights and consequently can have no grievances. It is impossible to understand how the Home Government can have consented to the appointment of such a committee. Mr. Harcourt spoke of gentle persuasion. If this is all that can be achieved by such a procedure, it is time that other measures are adopted. I believe I am voicing your sentiments when I say that this committee inspires the people of this country with no hope and its conclusions will leave the situation unchanged. We trust that the British Cabinet will realise that the situation is becoming graver every day and that it is absolutely necessary in the interests of the Empire that a Royal Commission composed of British statesmen, of Colonials and of Indians should be appointed to carry out a searching investigation of the allegations of cruelty and inhuman treatment.

THE INDIA COUNCIL

Gentlemen, notwithstanding the changes introduced in the government of this country by the Morley-Minto Reform Scheme, the improvements necessary in the existing administrative machinery are many and varied. The most important of these to which I desire to draw your pointed attention is that connected with the reconstruction of the Council of the Secretary of State for India which is at present under the consideration of His Majesty's Government. Having regard to the importance of the subject, I shall with your permission deal with it in some detail.

The Act of 1858 by which the Crown assumed the direct government of this country from the Company, provided for the Secretary of State for India a Council to advice and assist him in the administration of a vast dependency, but did not in the least relieve him of the responsibility which he owed to Parliament for the proper government of this country. The constitution and character of this Council have, with very few modifications, survived to the present day, despite the many attacks which have been made in successive years in and outside this Congress.

The question of reforming this body has after all come up for consideration, and on the 31st July last, Lord Crewe made a statement in the House of Lords in which he referred to its elaborate constitution and outlined certain changes which he hoped would improve the efficiency and usefulness of this body. Lord Crewe also stated that changes which he intended to make would require statutory authority and he added that he would welcome any criticism or any fresh ideas which might be brought forward. The sole idea was, he said,

> to improve and as far as possible perfect the machinery by which the daily, sometimes hourly, intercourse between those who represent the Imperial Government and those who control the actual Government, was carried out.

If the Congress had only to judge of this matter by the past history of that body, it is possible to come only to one conclusion, *i.e.*, that there is no use of attempting to mend the Council and that it must be ended. Resolutions in this strain have been passed by successive Congresses and it has been shown by a series of instances, how this body consistently and steadily acted in a reactionary manner in respect of all progressive measures, and how it has managed to preserve the privileges and sustained the claims of vested interests. I need not pursue this point any further because you are familiar with it. After the appointment, however, of two Indian members to the Secretary of State's Council, the changes in the *personnel* which Lord Morley introduced, and the influence of Lord Morley's own personality at the India Office went some way to make the agitation for the aboliton of the Council less strong than before. The presence of the Indian members on the Council was distinctly recognised to have been of much advantage to Lord Morley himself, as affording him the Indian point of view and giving him what he called "an Indian angle of vision." Lord Crewe has, strange to say, not laid as much stress on this aspect of the matter as one would desire. But the people of India would attach the greatest importance to it, especially in view of Lord Crewe's statement that the Council is not to

be abolished or stripped of its powers. The necessity for maintaining a body in England to advise and assist the Secretary of State for India was a matter of much discussion in Parliament at the time when the Act of 1858 was passed. Lord Stanley who was then responsible for the Bill in its final form explained the object of constituting the India Council to be to afford the Indian Secretary the means of ascertaining the needs and requirements of the territories for whose administration he became responsible to the Parliament. The ingrained idea of the Britisher has always been to ascertain the people's needs and requirements through their representatives and this idea was frequently in evidence in the course of the debates on all the India Bills of that time. Mr. Disraeli, the Prime Minister, who was responsible for the India Bill No. 2, dwelt upon the desirability of introducing the representative principle in the composition of the India Council in London, but regretted that the then unsettled state of the country did not admit of a representation of the people of India itself. In the resolutions of the House of Commons upon which the last Bill was finally based, this was again referred to, but in the Bill itself the practical effect given to the principle was, curiously enough, limited to the election of a proportion of members of the Council by the Court of Directors and Proprietors of the old Company, leaving the rest to be filled by the Crown. The idea of election, moreover, was sought to be further kept up after the death of the Company, by a process of self-election by the body of members originally nominated by the Court of Directors and Proprietors who, it was assumed, represented Indian interests. In the course of his speech on the Bill, Lord Stanley observed :

> If I am told that the proposed self-election is virtually an abandonment of that elective principle which the House has sanctioned, my answer is that we are willing to introduce the elective principle upon a wider scale if it were only possible to find a fitting and satisfactory constituency. I believe that recourse to the method of election as a way to the appointments to the India Council is the first idea which has entered the mind of every person who has considered the subject. The difficulty which all

persons on further consideration have felt is that of constituting a constituency which would answer the purpose.

The Earl of Derby who piloted the Bill in the House of Lords also used similar language.

Such was the state of things when the Council was brought into existence. What happened subsequently is well known. While on the one hand the Council entirely deviated in its character and functions from the impress which was originally sought to be given to it, the people and the administration of India have, on the other hand, progressed so far that the necessity of ascertaining their needs and requirements by their own representative institutions has been widely recognised and acted upon. The India Council, with the modifications made in the next few years, became a mere creature of the Secretary of State, to be consulted at will by him or to be overborne by him whenever it set itself in opposition to Imperial interests. On the other hand, so far as the interests of India were concerned, the Council became, by its composition mainly from the ranks of the retired Anglo-Indian officials, a means of steady obstruction at all times to all progressive measures, very often obtaining great control and influence over successive Secretaries of State whose interest in India, with rare exceptions, has been more or less of a transitory kind and who preferred to leave the routine of administrative duties to the committee of experts which Parliament in its wisdom had provided them with.

If Lord Crewe desires that this Council should survive and be a body useful to the Secretary of State for India, he must take account, on the one hand, of the original purpose for which the Council was instituted and, on the other hand, of the extent to which that purpose needs to be carried out under present conditions. In the first place, I think it will be agreed that, whatever the reforms introduced in the constitution and functions of the India Council in England, they should not in any sense be treated as interfering with the right of the people of India and the duty of the people of England to require the British Parliament, until such

time as India attains to responsible Self-Government within itself, to watch and control as legitimately as is necessary and possible, the administration of India through a Minister responsible to Parliament. In the next place, whatever changes might be made in the India Council, they must strictly preserve that body as an advisory one and must not in any manner convert it into an administrative machine. In legal theory, no doubt, such a change would not and could not be effected because it would involve a fundamental antagonism to the first principle of British Constitution, namely, the supremacy of the Parliament; but practically the changes in procedure now contemplated, I fear, are calculated to result in the establishment of an administrative body which would virtually be irresponsible. Lastly the changes in its constitution should be such as to enable it to be, in practice as in theory, really advisory; that is, it should be so constituted as to make it capable of promoting Indian aspirations and giving steady and constant advice to the Secretary of State in respect of the needs of progressive administration. If it was in 1858 considered essential that an elective element should exist in the Council, it needs no saying that at the present day it is absolutely indispensable.

In view of the express declaration of the Secretary of State that he has decided to retain the Council, I do not wish to discuss its abolition; and since suggestions have been invited, I think it is the duty and the privilege of this Congress to give its best consideration to the subject. The difficulty of providing an electorate for the India Council to represent the wants and wishes of the Indian people themselves has now ceased to exist. With the progress which has been achieved in this country within recent years and with the large and diverse forms of electorates which have been created all over the country, it is impossible to put forward the excuse of want of a proper electorate at the present day. Non-official members of the Provincial Councils, the bulk of whom are elected and represent the diverse interests of the people, have proved a perfectly satisfactory electorate in each Province, to return the

elected representatives of the people to the Imperial Council, and no reason could be adduced for the Government not availing themselves of these electorates and the elected non-official members of the Imperial Legislative Council itself, as proper constituencies for returning members to the India Council in England. We must, therefore, strongly urge on the Secretary of State for India that, in any reform he may contemplate in the constitution of the India Council, a proportion of not less than one-third of the members of that Council should consist of Indians elected by the non-official members of the different Legislative Councils in India.

The next requirement will be to confine the functions of the Council of India to those of advice, consultation and assistance and not to extend them to those of administration. It is unlikely that the Council would consist of entirely elected members ; but even if it did, it would be an unsound policy to convert the Council into an administrative body. What Lord Crewe contemplates, however, is a proposal

> to attach each member of the Council to particular departments of the India Office and initiate a system by which they may co-operate upon a particular work and by this means he hopes to initiate far more direct communication between the different official departments of the Government of India itself, without the necessity of passing through the various processes which at present are necessary.

He considers, moreover, that from this point of view a Council of eight would be adequate, with a provision for ten, including a financial expert. Now the effect of this proposed change must be apparent to all close observers, and that is that it will tend to tighten the control of the India Office over the departments of the Government of India on the one side, and, on the other, it will make the influence and power of each member of the Council of India in respect of the department to which he is attached much more effective than it can ever be under the present system of committees. It is obvious that in the future such every-day control and guidance over the Government of India, as may be necessary, should be

provided in India itself through the means of the expanded Legislative Councils and not by means of a Secretary of State in England placed virtually under the guidance of retired officials. Lord Crewe, no doubt, says that his system would not make them controllers of the particular departments. But the result of the system which he proposes is bound to make them so. I would advocate the continuance of the Council as an advisory body, even if it involves "cumbrous and dilatory procedure," with the introduction of only such changes as would be more in consonance with the original intention of working it up to the constitutional standard, by the admission of a larger number of Indians than at present. With this end in view I would strongly urge the fixing of a limit much higher than what has now been proposed by the Marquis of Crewe. The proposal of Lord Crewe, moreover, will create a dual control over the departments administered in India and will lead to an increase in correspondence between India and the India Office involving considerable delay in the settlement of pending questions, not to speak of possible friction. Correspondence with the Secretary of State is a well-known means of discouraging discussion in the Indian Legislative Councils and the more direct communication which Lord Crewe hopes to introduce, is calculated to affect the rights and privileges of the representatives of the people in our Legislative Councils in a serious manner.

I have already stated that an elective Indian element is essential and if it be not practicable to introduce it in the Council in respect of more than one-third of its strength, the remaining two-thirds might consist of other elements calculated to maintain its strength as a consultative and deliberative body. I would, therefore, suggest that another one-third should consist of members of Parliament and other men acquainted and in touch with the public and political life in England, while the remaining one-third may consist of ex-officials from India—Indian or European —who may be expected to bring to the Council the knowledge of actual administration which they have

gained in this country. I am sure you will bestow your best attention on these suggestions and I would request you to deliberate upon them and express your opinion for the consideration of the Secretary of State who has invited it. I am confident that His Lordship will be pleased to give your proposals the weight they deserve as emanating from this National organisation.

REFORMED COUNCILS

Coming to the questions connected with the reformed Council, I need not refer to the regulations in detail which were framed by the Indian Government for carrying out the Morley-Minto Reform Scheme. The Congress has in successive sessions expressed its regret that the regulations have not been made in the same liberal spirit in which the original reform-despatches were conceived. The public in India, at the time when the regulations were issued, being anxious to give a fair start to the scheme did not express their full sense of dissatisfaction with the proposed regulations, especially as they were reassured in this behalf by the express declarations of Lord Minto's Government at the time, which were as follow :—

> The Governor-General-in-Council is conscious that many of the details of the scheme which is being introduced may be found on trial to be unsatisfactory or capable of improvement. Experience alone can show how far methods which are new to India give to the different classes and interests a measure of representation proportionate to their importance and influence, and to what extent an untrained electoral machinery is suitable to the varying circumstances of the different Provinces and the numerous electorates. Defects will no doubt be discovered when the rules are put into operation, but, if this proves to be the case, the law admits of the regulations being amended without difficulty.

It was hoped, therefore, that the anomalies and serious defects, both of detail and of principle, which were found to exist in the regulations would be rectified at the first opportunity which presented itself after the first elections had been held and the Reformed Councils constituted. It has been, therefore, a matter of extreme disappointment to the public in India that the revision of the Council regulations which was made last year was

confined to making a few trivial changes and introducing a few amendments in consequence of the transference of the Imperial capital to Delhi and of the other changes embodied in the Delhi despatches. In the constitution of the Legislative Councils different proportions have been fixed in respect of the official and non-official, as well as the elected and nominated elements in the various Provinces, much of which to the ordinary mind seems to be founded on no intelligible principle of differentiation. Bengal from the first started with an elected non-official majority in its Legislative Council and in the redistribution of territories made in 1912, both old Bengal and new Behar have been given two separate Legislative Councils having elected non-official majorities. On the other hand, Madras and Bombay the oldest of the provinces, have been provided with a non-official majority composed of nominated and elected members barely sufficient to satisfy the regulations.

By far the most serious of the drawbacks in the regulations which have been allowed to exist in the revised regulations, are those relating to the disqualifications for membership, the arbitrary and unreasonable manner in which restrictions are imposed on candidates seeking election to the Councils, and the general disparagement of the educated classes that it involves. Property qualifications have been prescribed in various degrees and in various methods in the different Provinces and the decision of questions connected with electoral rules is committed to the absolute discretion of the Executive Government. It is our duty once again to urge an immediate revision of the regulations so as to make the non-official majorities in all Provincial Councils really effective for practical work, and to remove invidious differences in the qualifications prescribed for candidates seeking election.

In spite of the repeated and unanimous requests of the people of the United Provinces for the establishment of the Executive Council there, the question is hung up without the authorities assigning cogent reasons. Sir John Hewett's opposition to the proposal is too well known to

you, but with the change of the Lieutenant-Governorship in the United Provinces, it was hoped that it would receive sympathetic consideration at the hands of Sir James Meston, and it is a matter of considerable surprise to those who knew His Honour as a man of liberal and progressive views, that he has not yet formulated proposals for establishing an Executive Council. In view of the fact that this question was the subject of a resolution which was moved in his Council and which received strong support from the non-official members, I am hopeful that it will receive due consideration at the hands of the Government of India and the Secretary of State.

As regards the Imperial Legislative Council I may say that the representation of some of the Provinces is defective and for this reason I would suggest an increase of at least half a dozen seats on the Council and their being thrown open for popular election. We all know that at present we have at the head of the Government in India a sagacious statesman whose far-sighted and sympathetic policy has endeared him to the people of this country, and I fervently hope that His Excellency Lord Hardinge before laying down the reins of his exalted office will remove the present defects in the Imperial Council and make it fully representative.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

When the Government of India in 1908 submitted for approval to the Secretary of State the group of constitutional reforms which resulted in the passing of the Indian Councils Act, the Government of India claimed that their scheme as a whole "will really and effectively associate the people of India in the work, not only of occasional legislation, but of actual every-day administration". The fact that I want to emphasise here is what Lord Morley himself mentioned, that that scheme of reform

is not, and hardly pretends to be, a complete representation of the entire body of changes and improvements in the existing system that are evidently present to the minds of some of those whom your Government has consulted and that to the best of my judgment

are now demanded by the situation described in the opening words of the despatch.

Lord Morley proceeded to point out that it is

evidently desirable to present our reform of the Indian constitutional system as a whole and that from this point of view, it seems necessary to attempt without delay an effectual advance in the direction of Local Self-Government.

It is now five years since these words were written, and the Government of India are yet maturing proposals for making an advance in this direction, "without delay." The reluctance to revive the old village organisation and to establish village panchayats is particularly pronounced in some Provinces, while a degree of tardiness in considering proposals for the expansion of local and municipal administration coupled with the oft-repeated desire to hedge further advance with over-cautious restrictions, is noticeable among all grades of administrative authorities in India. Lord Morley quoted the memorable words of Lord Ripon that "it is not primarily with a view to improvement in administration that this measure is put forward and started; it is chiefly desirable as an instrument of political and popular education," and that there is little chance of affording any effective training to the people in the management of local affairs or of the non-official members thereof taking any real interest in local business, unless "they are led to feel that real power is placed in their hands and that they have real responsibilities to discharge."

The Royal Commission on Decentralisation which submitted its report shortly after this, fully endorsed Lord Morely's views and insisted that the village should be made the starting point of public life in India, that village panchayats should be revived all over the country as the first unit of Local Government, and that the constitution and functions of other local bodies should be broadened and liberalised in various ways. The Imperial and Provincial Governments have been cogitating over this part of the recommendations now for over four years, and repeated inquiries in the Imperial and Provincial

Legislative Councils have not so far elicited any sympathetic assurance as to the recommendations being likely to be carried out in the near future. The latest announcement is that the Government of India have submitted their proposals to the Secretary of State and obtained his approval, and that they would shortly introduce the necessary legislation for carrying them out. It is not easy to anticipate what these proposals are, but the Congress has a right to demand that the Commission's recommendations should be fully carried out, and the proposals of the Government of India should be placed before the public as a whole and not piece-meal. We must impress upon the Government that this question should be treated as part of a progressive political policy and not as one of mere administrative exigency.

PRIMARY AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

The unrest that swept over the country from one end to the other is a thing of the past, at any rate, we are no longer face to face with its turbid waters and dangerous and insidious currents, but only with some of the evils that have lain beneath the surface of the unrest and are now discernible. Now that the storm has happily passed away, let us address ourselves to the task of meeting the underlying evils in the way they ought to be. There had been steadily increasing feeling on the part of the people, of dissatisfaction with their surroundings and a steadily increasing yearning for a better and more bearable existence. Even a casual observer must be struck by the desire manifested at present on every side for more light in the shape of education, both primary and technical. Primary Education, I need not say, is the remedy of remedies that will help the masses at present steeped in ignorance, superstition and lethargy, to get out of the slough of despond, and will teach them self-help by placing within their reach, through the medium of Literature, the benefits that would accrue from adopting modern methods and principles in their hereditary and time-hallowed occupation of agriculture and other small industries; and that will surely mould in them a frame of mind that would co-operate with

the Government in any measure that may be taken for public good, by removing the disposition to believe in the ascription of wrong motives and intentions to Government as regards their particular acts and measures. In short Primary Education will give more food to the masses, reduce to an appreciable degree the acuteness of the economic problem, remove most of the social evils and conduce to the stability of the British Rule.

It is a source of great pleasure and satisfaction to observe that the recent visit of Their Imperial Majesties was an important land-mark in the history of our country. Ever since the blessed day of their advent and ever since His Imperial Majesty emphasised in his speeches the need for a wider element of sympathy in the administration of the country and pressed for a rapid advancement of education as the panacea for all our social and political evils, the essential importance of education, as a factor of national prosperity has now come to be fully recognised by the Government, and we gratefully acknowledge their earnest efforts to foster and push it forward. But at the same time we feel that they do not go far enough. The political fears that the Government entertain as regards the adoption of the principle of compulsion are altogether imaginary, and if the scheme which has been put forward is carefully considered and followed by Government, the administrative and financial difficulties with which the Government believe they are confronted, will soon disappear in practice. So long as the local institutions retain their strong official complexion, people would naturally hesitate to confide in them. But before these institutions are entrusted with the initiation and control of Primary Education, if they are made more popular and representative, the people would be glad to co-operate with them and would even be willing to bear the imposition of a special cess which will be ear-marked for the purpose of being devoted to Primary Education. I may point out that when, in the famous Despatch of 1854, Sir Charles Wood laid the foundation of the system of public education, a memorable advance was made. And as the authorities,

with genuine statesmanlike foresight, recognised that England's prime function in India was to superintend the tranquil elevation of the moral and intellectual standard of life among the people, I fail to see any plausible reason that could be adduced against making a modest and cautious beginning to introduce compulsory and free Primary Education in selected areas that may be considered to be ripe for it.

We in this Congress have noticed with pride and satisfaction the steps that have been taken by the progressive Governments of Baroda and Mysore to push on Compulsory Primary Education in their territories. The latest to fall into line with these States in this regard is Travancore. May we not expect the action which has been taken by the enlightened Rulers of these States will be followed by the Paramount Power? I think it may not be out of place to mention here that the Acts of the Legislature creating the Universities were passed immediately after the Great Mutiny and will ever remain a striking monument of the coolness, wisdom and foresight of the British race.

Before I leave the subject of education, I must ask the Government of the country to pay more attention to Technical Education than they have done hitherto. The problem of the poor and of the submerged is not so acute in India as elsewhere. But with the steady increase in the population that has been going on, with the rise in the price of food-stuffs and with an agrarian population which has been taxed to the utmost, it requires no prophet to say that the time will come—perhaps sooner than most people imagine—when the financial resources of the country will have to be strained to the utmost to cope with the situation. It is, therefore, necessary that a serious attempt should be made to push on Industrial and Technical Education by opening new schools and by subsidising at least some of the industries that deserve it.

LAND SETTLEMENT

It was that far-sighted statesman, Lord Cornwallis, who gave the Permanent Settlement to Bengal in 1793

which has proved a blessing not merely to landlords with whom it was concluded but to all classes of the community. Some portions of Madras also shared that benefit and it was the intention at the time that in other parts of India permanent settlements should be concluded with cultivators themselves. Read's Proclamation of 1796 for the settlement of the Baramahal, Munro's evidence given before a Committee of the House of Commons in 1813, and the correspondence in the fifties and sixties regarding the introduction of a settlement, all point to the conclusion that the assessment was intended to be permanent and unalterable. The difference in system was to be only as regards the party with whom the settlement was to be concluded, but there was to be no difference in regard to permanency. It was a recognised principle during the first half of the last century that the settlement with whomsoever it was made was to be a permanent one and that the assessment should be unalterable. Subsequently, however, it was contended that the Government should not sacrifice the unearned increment to which it was entitled; but in order to minimise frequent interference which it was recognised would lead to hardship and discontent, it was decided to give permanence in the assessment for a period of years, leaving to the cultivator the enjoyment of all the profits during the currency of such period. The Famine Commission of 1860 again brought forward the question of permanent settlement. The President of the Commission stated:

> The good which has been done by partial action on sound principles is both a justification and an encouragement to further advance; and entertaining the most earnest conviction that the State interests will be alike strengthened in an increasing ratio by the step, the first, and as I believe the most important, measure I have respectfully to submit for consideration is the expediency of fixing for ever the public demand on the land and thus converting settlement for perpetuity.

This recommendation was supported by the highest authorities, and the Government of India, in warmly supporting it, stated:

> His Excellency in Council believes that increased security of fixed property and comparative freedom from the interference of

fiscal officers of Government will tend to create a class which, although composed of various races and creeds, will be peculiarly bound to the British rule; while under proper regulations the measure will conduce materially to the improvement of the general revenue of the Empire.

In his famous Despatch of 1862, the Secretary of State observed:

> After the most careful review of all these considerations, Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that the advantages which may reasonably be expected to accrue, not only to those immediately connected with the land, but to the community generally, are sufficiently great to justify them in incurring the risk of some prospective loss of land revenue in order to attain them, and that a settlement in perpetuity in the districts in which the conditions required are, or may hereafter be, fulfilled is a measure dictated by sound policy and calculated to accelerate the development of the resources of India and to ensure to the highest degree the welfare and contentment of all classes of Her Majesty's subjects in the country.

The above Despatch authorized a permanent settlement in tracts where four-fifths of the cultivable land had been brought under cultivation and assessed according to the then existing methods of settlement. Though this condition was found to have been fulfilled in most parts of the country, the decision was not given effect to, and, with the departure of Lord Canning and the change in the Ministry, narrower views prevailed, with the result that, after voluminous correspondence, the sound and sympathetic policy advocated by Lord Canning and sanctioned by Sir Charles Wood was given up. Again when that illustrious statesman, the late Marquis of Ripon, was at the head of the administration, he laid down the principle that in districts which had been surveyed and assessed by the Settlement Department, assessments should undergo no further revision except on the sole ground of rise in price, a step which, in the words of one of my distinguished predecessors, now no more, was the best compromise which could be effected after the old right had been sacrificed. But on the departure of Lord Ripon from India his proposal was vetoed by the Secretary of State in his Despatch of 1885 in which, while abandoning the idea of a permanent settlement, he directed that enhancement

should be based mainly on considerations of general increase in the value of land. Settlements and re-seltlements are now regulated by the rules laid down in that Despatch. It is admitted that in the prosperity and contentment of the vast agricultural population lies the strength of the administration and that the measure of the ryot's prosperity largely depends on the revenue that he has to pay. Though we have been contending for now more than thirty years that the ryot's burden is not susceptible of any further enhancement, the fiscal side of the question dominates the policy of the Government and they are reluctant to forego the right of enhancing the assessment which they now possess. The English nation is a manufacturing nation, while India is a purely agricultural country. While the great increase in the manufacturing activity of Great Britain has given its inhabitants such extensive scope for employment that the want of land as a field of investment and employment for labour is comparatively little felt, India has no industries other than agriculture and is under the necessity of exporting her raw products. Her one national industry, therefore, deserves the fostering care of the Administration. The introduction of a Permanent Settlement, while securing the contentment and prosperity of the agricultural classes, will also indirectly augment the public revenue.

But the authorities do not seem to fully realise in practice that in a prosperous and contented peasantry lies the strength of the Empire. While doing our best to make them appreciate that the Permanent Settlement is the only solution of India's agrarian problem, it behoves us as practical men to moderate our demand to the extent to which the Government are likely to yield, never forgetting for a moment the object we have in view. It behoves us also to ask for the removal of the many serious hardships of re-settlements and the heavy burden of increasing assessments. May we not therefore reasonably urge that thirty years is too short a period for settlements and that it should be extended to a period of not less than sixty years in order to give it an appearance at least of quasi-

permanency? We should also press on the attention of the Government of India the desirability of confining enhancements solely to a substantial rise in prices and of fixing a maximum limit of 12½ per cent. to enhancements in revisionary settlements. It was proposed by some of our eminent men that the rules for settlement should be embodied in a legislative enactment, and this proposal has had the approval of such a high authority as the Decentralisation Commission. While the Local Government decline to allow the matter to be discussed in the Provincial Councils, the Government of India are not disposed to take action in the matter. It is therefore our clear duty to press the matter on the Government of India, in order that in the absence of permanent settlement they may at least agree to a compromise in the direction proposed, on the maxim of 'Half a loaf is better than no bread.'

While on this subject I should like to draw the attention of the Congress to the present grave economic situation caused by the increasing struggle for existence, the abnormal rise in prices and unemployment in the country. Foodstuffs are being sold at famine prices and enormous rise has an oppressing effect on the average man. No doubt we can understand the plausible reason often put forward that modern facilities of communications are bound to have the effect of equalising prices. At the same time we cannot lose sight of the fact that high prices in manufacturing countries do not affect the people to the same extent as they do in this country where there are no industries—the only industry being that of agriculture. It is therefore the duty of the State to find some remedy for the high prices now prevailing. I fully trust that the Government are not unmindful of their responsibility in the matter and will devise some means of checking this growing economic evil.

THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

The question of the employment of Indians in the higher and more responsible positions in the Public

Service of this country is not a question of merely individual careers, but is one of much higher and wider importance. Not to speak of the material and economic drain that the exclusion of Indians from higher posts in the public service of their own country involves, it is repugnant to the nation's sense of self-respect. With the growth of intelligence and self-consciousness among the people, there is an increasing disposition on their part to compare their own position with that of other nations of the world, and to regard their present political status as incompatible with the rights of freedom and equality conferred on them by the British Constitution and guaranteed to them by British traditions. In the words of Sir Thomas Munro :

> The aim of the British administration of India was to be to raise the minds of the natives, to raise their character and to render them worthy of filling higher situations in the management of the country, so that in fulness of time Indians would be able to frame a regular Government for themselves and to conduct and preserve it.

We feel that we are not in this respect treated in accordance with the spirit of the Proclamations and promises made by the British Sovereigns, the Parliament and responsible Ministers. It is, therefore, a matter of sincere pleasure and great satisfaction to us that a Royal Commission under the able Chairmanship of that eminent and sympathetic statesman, Lord Islington, has been appointed to enquire into the question of the Public Services. Without in any way anticipating the recommendations it may make, I can say that the manner in which the Commission began to take evidence during the last cold weather, amply justifies the hope that it will do justice to Indians when it comes to formulate its final conclusions. In the course of the speech in which he opened the sittings of the Commission on the 8th of January last, at Madras, his Lordship said :

> We are confident that we shall receive such assistance and co-operation that subsequently when the fruits of our labours are published it may be found that we have reached a reasonable basis of agreement which will give satisfaction both

to the just demands of the services and to the legitimate aspirations of His Majesty's Indian subjects and be consonant with the orderly development of the administration of this great country.

The remarkable insight and the keen interest displayed by Lord Islington in the course of the enquiry encourage us in the belief that the result will be gratifying to the expectations raised in the minds of the people. It will not be out of place for me to express a hope that the much-discussed question of the separation of judicial from executive functions will receive a solution at the hands of the Commission, which will satisfy public opinion.

In the course of the evidence before the Commission, it was suggested by some of the witnesses that the Public Service in India should not be open to those Colonists who do not treat Indians on a footing of equality. And if much stress was not laid down on this, it was due to the fact that the situation in South Africa had not assumed such an acute form and so dangerous a proportion as at present. As the crisis in South Africa has become so threatening as to constitute an imminent danger to the interests of the Empire, I venture to submit to the Commission the advisability and necessity of laying down, as a matter of principle, that those Colonies which do not treat Indians as equal subjects of the King will not have a share in the administration of India, and candidates from such Colonies will be debarred from taking part in any competitive examination, or entering into any of the services of this country. In making an earnest appeal to Lord Islington and members of the Royal Commission to include this suggestion in their recommendations, I would like to point out that it is not only calculated to show to South Africa that the Commission wishes to maintain strict impartiality, but it will serve as a warning to other Colonies and prevent them from following the example of the Union Government. It will also strengthen the hands of the Government of India and the Imperial Government in any action which they may contemplate to take in an emergency.

INDIANS IN THE ARMY

Closely allied to the question that I have now dealt with is the question of higher career for Indians in the Army. Meeting at Karachi so close to places distinguished as the home of warlike races from whom the Indian sepoy is largely drawn, we can appropriately go into it at some length. From its earliest years the Congress has included in its resolutions a demand for the establishment of military colleges in India in which natives of India as defined by statute, may be educated and trained for appointment as commissioned or non-commissioned officers, according to their capacity and qualifications, in the Indian Army. That demand apparently remained unheeded till the advent of Lord Curzon whose Viceroyalty was a succession of promises either broken or only partially redeemed. You may remember, gentlemen, that soon after his arrival he formed a *Cadet Corps* consisting of Indian Princes and Noblemen with head-quarters at Dehra-Dun. The Congress of 1901, held at Calcutta, welcomed it as the first instalment of a policy which will culminate in the establishment of military colleges, as recommended by His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, at which natives of India may be educated and trained for employment as officers of the army. The expectation was not realised and the Madras Congress in 1908 reiterated its demand, in view specially of the high recognition of the valour and fidelity of Indian troops by His late Imperial Majesty King Edward VII, in his message to the Princes and the Peoples of India. Lord Minto, true to the spirit of the policy of his Government, pressed on the authorities at Home a scheme framed by his Lordship in this matter which had the full support of his Council and of the Commander-in-Chief. The words in which he referred to the scheme, in the course of a speech he delivered as Chairman of a meeting in London, on April 24, 1912, deserve repetition here. That speech seems to be a remarkable illustration of his policy, his broad sympathies and of his grasp of Indian points of view which distinguished his career in India.

His Lordship said:—

I must take friendly exception to what Sir W. C. Plowden has said as to my not having faced the question of Commissions in the Army for Indian gentlemen. I can assure you that I not only faced it, but that I fought it every day. It was my hobby the whole time I was in India to try and obtain such commissions for Indian gentlemen and I hope that I had succeeded. It is curious that British opinion of to-day as regards the possibility of granting commissions is less advanced than it was a generation ago. The views of many people to-day are much behind the times in comparison with those of distinguished officers even before the Mutiny. As long ago as 1844, Sir Henry Lawrence dealt with the question. Subsequently Lord Napier wrote a memorandum in 1885 on the same subject, stating that the Government of India had then the matter under consideration. Sir George Chesney, Sir Donald Stewart and others, all held the same views. All these distinguished officers admitted that a great injustice was being perpetrated in withholding such commissions; they maintained that young Indian gentlemen should have greater opportunities for military distinction; but at the same time they all laid down that they must not command British troops; and that the solution of the difficulty was the raising of special Indian regiments in which Indian gentlemen should receive commissions. I am afraid that racial antipathies, however narrow many of us may think them, are much stronger in India than they are at Home. I do not know why. But at any rate, we cannot do away with these racial antipathies by word of command; the only way to lesson them is by example and by constant sympathy, for our Indian fellow-subjects. By force of example and by constant sympathy, let us hope that racial prejudices may gradually disappear. Under existing conditions it would, in my opinion, be a grave mistake to appoint a young Indian of good family to a British regiment or to a regiment of the Indian Army against the wish of its British officers. It would only create friction and we should be worse off than we were before. I fought this question in India over and over again and before I came away, the Government of India, the Commander-in-Chief, and all my Council were in agreement with me that the commission should be granted. We therefore framed a scheme for the raising of a regiment to be officered by selected Indian gentlemen who would generally have received a military education in the *Cadet Corps*. Our proposal was that the regiment should begin with a skeleton of a few British officers to give it a start; and young Indian officers should be grafted to it in the ordinary way, with *bona fide* commissions, who would rise in due course of promotion; while the British skeleton will gradually disappear and an Indian officer will eventually obtain command of the regiment which would be in the course of 20 years or so. The scheme was sent Home and it was my earnest hope that it would receive official sanction before I left India. I am sorry to say I do not

know what has happened to it since then. I feel, however, that it would be unfair to the Government of India not to take this opportunity of saying that as far as they were concerned, the necessity for the commission was recognised and the difficulty was dealt with. The opposition to our proposal was at Home!

This last sentence illustrates the spirit in which the India Council deals with Indian aspirations. Fortunately, however, a beginning has been made by His Majesty nominating two or three Indian noblemen only recently and it remains for the Indian National Congress to bring to bear on His Majesty's Government the weight of the unanimous and earnest wish of the Indian people for a satisfactory solution of this important question.

ISLAM OUTSIDE INDIA

Before I conclude, I desire to refer, however briefly, to the troubles and misfortunes that the Muslim world outside India has endured during the past few years. The period has been fraught with fateful changes in the recent history of Islam, changes materially affecting the importance of Muslim countries as independent countries which stirred Muslim feeling throughout the world to a degree seldom witnessed before. The Mussalmans who have seen the subversion of the Ottoman power in Europe, and the strangling of Persia, cannot find the same comfort as before, in their past achievements or present temporal power, when they have to think of the future of Islam. The progress of the unfortunate Balkan War was anxiously watched by Mussalmans of India, its disastrous results caused the greatest concern and disappointment, the dismemberment of Turkey by depriving her of her European Provinces evoked wide-spread regret, in which non-Muslims also shared, and the fate of Muslim States and their treatment by Europe made the deepest and most painful impression.

I do not consider it necessary to go at any length into the subject as abler men have fully dealt with it on other occasions. I trust that it will not be construed as a desire on my part to underrate in any way the supreme importance which the question has in the eyes of the

Muslim. European critics in estimating the effect of the Turkish reverses in the Balkans on the Muslim world have generally failed to take into account the Muslim opinion itself. But M. Mijatovich who has represented Serbia both at Constantinople and at the Court of St. James is very conciliatory when he says that

> political interest made us, the Balkan nations, paint the Turks as cruel Asiatic tyrants incapable of European civilisation. An impartial history would prove that the Turks are rather Europeans than Asiatics, and that they are not cruel tyrants, but a nation loving justice and fairness and possessing qualities and virtues which deserve to be acknowledged and respected. The martial era of the Turkish history having been, not ingloriously, closed, historical Providence seems to have in store a high mission for the Turks.

The defeat of Turkey, while it has caused intense grief and depression to the Islamic world, has also brought Muslims closer together in a way that nothing else was capable of doing. The worst adversity has its lessons to teach him who has a mind to profit by it. The Mussalmans have realised the full import of the grave crisis in their history, which has roused in them a feeling of brotherhood. They never before felt the strength of Islam a unifying force so keenly as they do at present. They had great faith in the essential beneficence of modern civilisation. But it is greatly to be deplored that that faith has been rudely shaken ; and they rightly feel that their future lies in their own hands. I look upon the desire for unity and self-reliance manifested by my co-religionists as an awakening pregnant with great possibilities for the future.

CONCLUSION

The decade that is closing with the current year is a momentous period in the history of our country, a period of stress and storm such as marks great upheavals in the march of humanity. In fact, the Indian unrest from which, thanks alike to the good sense of the people and to British statesmanship, we have safely emerged, was part of the prodigious wave of awakening and unrest that swept over the whole of Asia during all this period. You are aware, Gentlemen, that this period was ushered in, roughly speaking, by the victory of Japan over Russia, and it

may be said to have ended with the Balkan War and its disastrous results to Turkey. In India, Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty which at the beginning raised great hopes in the minds of the people, constituted but the lull that usually precedes the storm. Through the exceedingly difficult and anxious years that followed, the ship of Indian administration was steered by the capable hands of two British statesmen who, assisted by the eye of sympathy lent to them by His Imperial Majesty, diagnosed the disease in our administration and applied the remedy. Their names will stand out prominently in the pages of Indian history in relation to this period. A wider field has been opened for the satisfaction of our aspirations by associating the people in the Government of the country. The reforms that have been introduced are far-reaching in their character and are necessary steps for giving the people a much larger share in the administration of their country. Lord Minto, in fact, interpreted the reforms in this way, if I remember right, in a memorable speech he made in London soon after his return from India, and added, in effect, that it would be unwise to withhold, for long, fiscal autonomy from India. These reforms depend for their success on the unity and solidarity of the Indian people among themselves and their hearty co-operation with the Rulers. Gentlemen, it was my privilege in 1903, addressing the Congress at Madras, as Chairman of the Reception Committee, to point to the harmony that subsisted, so far as that Presidency was concerned, between the Hindu and the Muhammadan communities. Now, as your President, I am exeedingly happy to bear testimony to the important fact of the misunderstanding and distrust that divided the two communities in other parts of the country, having become almost a thing of the past, as shown by the trend of responsible public opinion among my co-religionists during the past few months and by their unusually large attendance within this hall. " If you want progress, be at peace with all," was said by one of our wisest men, the celebrated poet and philosopher, Hafiz. Muhammadanism, rightly understood, has no antipathy to any other religion.

It is based on the widest conception of liberalism and democracy. A policy of narrow aloofness or intolerant hostility is alien to the spirit of my religion. Gentlemen, the times are with us. Let us, Hindus, and Mussalmans, Parsis and Christians, all join hands in brotherly co-operation and press forward, with confidence and faith in the work that lies before us. I have already dealt with the advance that is being made by my co-religionists towards a *rapprochement*. May I now earnestly request my Hindu brethren to embrace this opportunity, to step forward and to clasp the extended hand in a spirit of earnestness, of goodwill and of appreciation? I have many friends among you. I know that you have been anxious to join hands with your Mussulman brethren. The time is riper now for a clear understanding than it has been for years past. Concessions there must be, and sacrifices you cannot avoid. When harmony has to be restored and conjoint work has to be done, we must ignore trifles which actuate small minds, and concentrate our activities upon the larger work of consolidation.

Under the suzerainty of the most powerful and progressive of modern nations, our goal should be the attainment of autonomous Government in India, as indicated in the memorable Delhi Despatch of our beloved Viceroy; and although it may not be within the reach of the generation I have now the privilege of addressing, still it should be the constant endeavour of all of us to secure it for posterity. Only by such endeavour shall we show that we have really profited by our contact with the British nation, its literature and civilisation, and that we are true to the traditions in which we have been nurtured. Let us strive for unity amongst us, for the advancement of the nation, and for bringing the forces of progress and of solidarity into line with our achievements in the past and of our expectations for the future. If these sentiments animate us, we must not lose a moment to take it at the flood the tide of national unity which has in-flowed in this, our Motherland. That tide, by God's grace, will surely sweep away in its majestic onward course the unnatural and artificial barriers of race, colour and religion.

Twenty-ninth Congress—Madras—1914

HON. BABU BHUPENDRANATH BASU

BROTHER-Delegates,—You will forgive me if I am unable to make a suitable response to the call that you have made upon me. It is not possible for me to do so. I feel that heavy responsibility of my position in being called upon to take your chair at what I consider one of the most important crises in the history of our lives. I feel, I say so honestly and frankly, my utter inability to fulfil the expectations which have been raised in your minds by the far too flattering reference to myself by my friend and leader, Mr. Surendranath Banerjea (*applause*), and I feel also to some extent hampered by precedents of the past in which the presidential address has always been delivered in writing and, having regard to the seriousness of the occasion, I think I may fairly claim the privilege that the past Presidents of the Congress exercised in delivering to you a manuscript address on this occasion. I must frankly tell you that I have tried to make that address as sober and as moderate as possible under the circumstances of the present year, and there may be some disappointments that it has not gone as far as many would wish, and that it has stopped short of the expectations which several of my friends may have formed of an address from me; but in justification I would plead the peculiar circumstances of the year and the responsibility of the position to which you have been pleased to call me. With these prefatory words I would place my address before you. I know the difficulty under which an audience is placed when it has got to listen to a long address. I know it and, I am afraid having suffered from it myself in the past, I have

taken care to make that address as brief as possible. I have omitted the consideration of many important subjects, a consideration which I am sure will be given to them on the Subjects Committee and, later on probably, if it commends itself to your judgment in this Congress itself. For the present I have confined myself to certain grave and important issues in the evolution of our national life, issues which I wish our countrymen would always bear in mind. (*Loud and prolonged applause.*)

Mr. Chairman, Brother-delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I frankly confess my utter inability to express to you how deeply grateful I feel for the great honour you have done me in electing me to preside over the deliberations of this Congress. To me it is not a matter of custom or convention, for the Congress and the ideals it represents hold me by the roots which have penetrated into the innermost recesses of my soul. To us, Indians, no higher reward is conceivable than to be called upon by the free choice of our countrymen to preside over what may be justly regarded as the assembly of the Nation; but I am not vain enough to take it as a personal tribute. Your choice has fallen on one whose faithful adherence to the Congress extends over a quarter of a century, for I had the privilege so far back as 1886 of receiving my initiation as a humble volunteer from one whose name will always remain indissolubly associated with India's progress in political life. True it is that age prevents him from lending us the support of his presence, but the words of wisdom which Dadabhai Naoroji (*applause*) from time to time still addresses us from his retirement, carry their inspiration, to wherever men's thoughts dwell upon the future of India.

Brother-delegates, if you have chosen the acolyte of 1886 as your high priest of to-day, I am still, as I hope to be always, your devoted servant; you will forgive me, however, if I feel over-weighted by a sense of my difficulties. We meet in your great and historic city, the intellectual centre of a Presidency which in the past gave to the world some of its profoundest thinkers, and, to us in the present, has given some of our most distinguished

jurists, administrators, scholars and statesmen. Nor can I forget that some of our greatest men have in this city held the seat which I have the honour to occupy to-day. Budruddin Tyabji (*applause*), Ananda Mohan Bose (*applause*) and Lal Mohan Ghose were men who would throw lustre on any country and of whom we are justly proud. Your last President, Dr. Rash Behari Ghose, (*applause*) a gentleman of equal eminence, enjoys a European reputation for his brilliant scholarship and profound legal knowledge. Difficult as my position is, I feel however the uplifting influence which comes to the humble devotee on an arduous pilgrimage following the footprints of the great ones of the Earth, and, Sir, may I refer to the sense of protection that I feel under your distinguished chairmanship, for I deem it an honour and privilege to be associated with one who is held in respect and veneration throughout the length and breadth of India (*applause*) and who, we are all glad to see, is still willing and able to take an active part in the affairs of our country. (*Hear, hear.*)

THE PRESENT SITUATION

Brother-delegates, the difficulties that are personal to me are nothing compared to the difficulties under which we meet on this occasion. We are in the midst of a great and devastating war, comparable only to the fearful cataclysms of nature; we are involved in a struggle for life and death, and what is more between the elemental passions and the higher ideals of humanity. The mind is absorbed in the great issues now hanging in the battlefields of Europe, where our brethren, British and Indian, are mingling their blood in the cause of honour, liberty and justice. (*Hear, hear.*) This is not the time to deal with matters upon which we may differ; all controversies must be laid to rest in the presence of the great and awe-inspiring drama of human history, now being enacted before our eyes, and we must present to the world the spectacle of a united Empire, animated by the sole desire to bravely combat the dangers with which we are threatened and to see that not only civilization, but the very soul

of humanity, may not lapse into chaos and be utterly lost. We hesitated, therefore, for a long time over the holding of this session of the Congress, and though I accept the ultimate decision not to have a break in the continuity of the Congress, I confess I find my course very difficult.

CONGRESS : HIS MAJESTY'S OPPOSITION

For, one of the principal functions of the Congress is to discharge the duties of His Majesty's Opposition with this important difference, that we have at all times been ready to recognise and appreciate the good work done by our Government, and to act whenever possible, in co-operation with it which His Majesty's Opposition in England is not always willing to do. It is this function, though exercised with great restraint, that has sometimes caused irritation to Anglo-Indian administrators impatient of criticism and accustomed to look upon their system of Government as the best that human forethought could devise. Things, however, have vastly improved since the Congress began in 1885 ; a growing sense of responsibility on our side and a growing deference to popular opinion on the other, have characterised our mutual relations for some time past; and we, upon whose devoted heads the late Lord Dufferin opened the vials of his wrath, have had the high honour of being received by the representative of the Crown in this country and by His Majesty's Secretary of State in England. At the present moment, and in the present crisis, this function of the Congress must necessarily remain in abeyance. We have our quarrels, our differences, our grievances, but these domestic matters, however grave they may be, must wait ; and we may for the present turn to the other aspect of the Congress, namely, as the voice of United India, which recognises no distinction of creed, caste or colour, as the embodied expression of national sentiment, national hopes and national aspirations and as the great instrument of national education.

OUR FIRST DUTY

But our first duty to-day must be to express what is uppermost in the minds of us all—to convey, through

our Viceroy, to our Gracious Sovereign the whole-hearted loyalty and devotion of His Majesty's Indian subjects to the Throne and the Empire. In this respect, as it is rapidly becoming in many other respects, Mussalman and Hindu in India are one (*hear, hear*), and the reason is obvious.

BRITISH RULE NO CHALLENGE TO THE PEOPLE

British rule in India has not come as a challenge to the Indian people. The first and greatest step in the acquisition of sovereignty was taken at the invitation of the people themselves, harassed under the enfeebled grasp of a decadent administration. There have been wars since, but between brave men who have fought courageously, and have accepted the issue as between honourable combatants, our princes becoming the friends and allies of His Britannic Majesty under solemn treaties, and our people, equal subjects of His Majesty under Charters and Statutes equally solemn; and this mutual relationship and understanding, worthy of those who had the boldness to conceive and found the Empire, though sometimes apt to be forgotten under the passion of dominion or the prejudice of colour to the infinite detriment of both sides, has been on the whole the guiding principle of British rule in India, well recognised by British statesmen and well understood by the princes and people of India. It is this which has reconciled the Government of England to the martial spirit of India, to her ancient civilisation and her pride of race. (*Hear, hear.*)

INDIA'S NEW HOROSCOPE

India has recognised that, at this supreme crisis in the life of the Empire, she should take a part worthy of herself and of the Empire in which she has no mean place. She is now unrolling her new horoscope, written in the blood of her sons, in the presence of the assembled nations of the Empire and claiming the fulfilment of her Destiny.

OUR VICEROY AND SECRETARY OF STATE : TRUE SERVANTS OF INDIA

And, Brother-delegates, if India has been doing her part and her duty, the great statesmen who are now serving in her cause have also stood by her, faithful and loyal. I was in England when the first message of our Viceroy, tense with emotion and solemn as befitting the occasion, reached our King and the British people, conveying to them the whole-hearted devotion and enthusiastic loyalty and support of the Indian Princes and the Indian people. I can hardly express to you the impression that that message created: its dignity and simplicity went straight into every heart. All in a moment, England realised the unity and solidarity of the Empire, and the great part India had played and was determined to play. Those great principles of equality and justice, on which rest the foundations of the British rule in India, became invested with the lineaments of life and reasserted their sway over people's minds and hearts. Our Viceroy is truly a worthy servant of India and of England (*hear, hear.*): would God had spared him the sorrow and anxiety of the last few months. His mind must be sore, whether in the midst of crowding work or free, if ever it is free, in the stillness of solitary rest, with an aching void which nothing can fill, for who will bring to him again that gentle companionship and sweet grace, that steadfast devotion and unselfish love, which must have won for Lady Hardinge the supreme place in the heart of her husband, and which secured her the affection and esteem of all who were ever admitted to her charming and dignified presence. And alas! the void will be all the deeper, all the keener, by the loss of his eldest son, for who will now lighten the burden of a heart overladen?

And, gentlemen, if Lord Hardinge has stood by India, responsive and loyal, the Marquis of Crewe has been a noble interpreter of the sentiments of the people of India to the people of England. Amidst the solemnity of the British House of Lords and the splendour of its surroundings, in the presence of some of the great Pro-

Consuls who had devoted years of unsparing work to India and of a distinguished assembly, he announced in tones of suppressed emotion and pleasure the magnificent message of India's loyalty, of India's devotion and India's support; and an audience, more distinguished for its dignified bearing than even the Senate of ancient Rome, threw to the winds all reserve and broke forth into tumultuous applause. Truly the noble Marquis performed his duty on this historic occasion as the spokesman of India, her accredited representative in England; and no less faithfully and zealously did his gifted Under-Secretary bear his part in the House of Commons. We tender our sincere and grateful thanks to these servants of India, who, though not of our race or our faith, have justly acquitted themselves as the true representatives of India at this momentous crisis of our national life. *(Hear, hear.)*

THE CONGRESS DEPUTATION: ITS SIGNIFICANCE

Brother-delegates, I fear the limits that I have set myself in this address will not permit me to deal with a subject about which naturally you would expect some information from me. I shall refer to it briefly, leaving to my colleagues—among whom I see my friend Mr. Samarth—to deal with it at greater length. The deputation, consisting of representatives from all parts of India, which the Congress appointed at Karachi in connection with the proposed reforms of India Council, proceeded to England last summer, and had the privilege of an interview with the Secretary of State. People here are apt to make light of this privilege of getting access to the fountain-head of all authority over India. To my mind, it is highly useful to be able to have such direct access, without negotiating through circuitous official channels in the tow of red tape. A frank interchange of views, if conducted with dignity and moderation, helps to remove much misapprehension and is always conducive to better mutual understanding. The very fact that men go all this distance, and cheerfully bear the expense and inconvenience of a long and arduous journey, is accepted as a token of the earnestness of the mission and lends to it additional

weight. We owe this recognition of the Congress to the influence and indefatigable labours of that veteran friend of India, Sir William Wedderburn (*hear, hear*) who, by his single-minded devotion to our cause which has made his own, has laid us under an obligation which we can never hope to repay and the full extent of which will never be known. To him also the Deputation owes its favourable reception by men of light and leading in England, who welcomed us with cordiality and listened to us with attention.

THE INDIA COUNCIL BILL

The Bill which the noble Marquess of Crewe introduced in the House of Lords last summer fell short of Indian expectations though it made some notable concessions. But not all the efforts of the Secretary of State, backed though he was by Lord Morley and the whole weight of the Liberal party, nor the unceasing labours of the Deputation were of any avail in saving the Bill from rejection by the House of Lords. Two factors contributed to this result—the united resistance of the Conservative peers misled, I am sorry to say, by some of those, who from their official position in the past are supposed to have knowledge of Indian affairs, and the opposition in India, which was put to dexterous use by the opponents of the measure. The Council of India Bill 1914, had two principal features—it made statutory provision for the inclusion in the Council of two Indian members, now depending on the mere pleasure of the Secretary of State, and it enabled the Secretary of State in certain matters, where he has now to act with the advice of the majority of his Council, to dispense with such advice. The two Indian members were to be selected from a panel to be chosen by the non-official members of the various Legislative Councils in India. This method of selection naturally excited hostile criticism both in England as well as in India, though directed from different standpoints. This is what Lord Curzon, the spokesman of the Opposition, said:

I venture to say that it is an utterly indefensible proposal. . . . The men who would be put upon the panel would be public men, platform-speakers, men who would be indentified with popular movements in India.

His view was that the selection even from a panel would bring in public men in India into the Council: that was also unhappily the Anglo-Indian view. The Indian view was that the method of selection did not give any guarantee that men who would be a weak echo of Government would not be selected, for it was justly urged that there would be no difficulty in putting on the panel, through the composite constituencies of the Indian Councils containing, as they do, a large proportion of Anglo-Indians and Government nominees, any two persons whom the Government wanted. We overlooked the other aspect so prominently brought forward by Lord Curzon, that though it would be quite easy for Government to have on the panel men whom it favoured, it would not be so easy for it to disregard time after time the men at the top who naturally would be men whom the country wanted. I do not say it is, by any means, a method of selection which we would recommend, but it would certainly be better than what obtains at present, which is nomination, pure and simple; and if the experiment worked well for a certain time, a revision of the law towards greater freedom of election would come, just as Lord Morley's experiment of having two Indian members in the Council by its success drew from the Opposition the admission that they were prepared to give it a statutory recognition. It would no doubt mean delay, but if the current were set in the right direction, progress, even if slow, no one could stay or stop. The second clause, which was vehemently opposed by Lord Curzon, was the provision which would enable the Secretary of State to act independently, where he has now to act with the advice of the majority of his Council. So far as I can make out, the concurrence of the majority of the Council is necessary, firstly, in the division and distribution of patronage and power of nomination and, secondly, in the grant or appropriation of the revenues of India. I do not

think, we in India need concern ourselves with patronage, for we are practically out of it. And as regards expenditure, the Council was not much of a safeguard when India was burdened with the cost of military undertakings with which she had no concern, and its use in this direction has become considerably restricted since the findings of the Welby Commission. Lord Curzon would maintain and enhance the powers of the Council, though he admitted that a masterful Secretary of State like Lord Morley could easily impose his views on the Council even under its present constitution. We in India have never been highly impressed by the usefulness of this Council: it must give to the Secretary of State a lesser sense of responsibility, when he shares it with a large body under the provisions of a Parliamentary Statute: it must to some extent reduce the effective strength of criticism in Parliament since the Secretary of State would be able to take shelter behind a board of experts. The high position that some of the members, appointed under its own authority, have held in India is in itself a serious disadvantage: they look upon the India of the present with eyes turned to the India of the past in which they had played an honourable and distinguished part. True, they have had great experience of Indian affairs: but it is an experience naturally one-sided: it is no disparagement to them to say that they have hardly been in touch with the main currents of Indian life which have flowed unnoticed past their feet, I do not entirely blame them. Ability and efficiency may be the heritage of the Civil Service, developed by training and tradition, and may go a long way, but they are not of much help when one has to penetrate the screen which differences in religion, language, customs and modes of thought have set between us, a screen rendered denser by a false sense of prestige on the one side, and not unnatural reserve and sensitiveness on the other. Where is the invisible way that will pierce through this tangled mass and bring to light what otherwise is hidden and obscure? Sympathy does not grow in the stifling atmosphere of power and privilege, royal words notwithstanding, (*hear, hear*) for it is a gift of which the

gods are jealous. This inevitable ignorance of the inside life of India necessarily grows deeper with age and distance. The members of the Council of the Secretary of State, whose sympathies would naturally incline them to uphold the views of those who are carrying on their tradition and policy in India, soon find themselves quite unable to differ from them, and are constrained to follow what appears to be the only safe course, namely, to lend their support to their successors in India. Thus they become a second check on the Viceroy and the Secretary of State instead of being a guiding and motive force.

THE REFORM THAT INDIA WANTS

A Council from which the glory had departed would gradually pave the way for the reform which India has long pressed, namely, the abolition of the Council altogether, which would bring the Secretary of State for India more into line with the other Secretaries of State and place him under greater Parliamentary control. These points of view were probably overlooked in India, and the position of Sir William Wedderburn, as President of the British Committee of the Congress and of your delegates became extremely embarrassing. If the Bill had passed through the House of Lords, it would have come to the lower House, where the Indian views could be strongly urged and where the debate might give rise to declarations of policy from responsible statesmen which would be of great use to us in the future. But all this was not to be: the opponents of the measure, strengthened by the support in India, had their day and the Bill was lost. I would not have trespassed upon your patience with this long account of the Deputation, if I had not felt that at no distant date the Bill may be revived, let us hope, largely liberalised. When the time comes, we must press for the reforms which we have been advocating from the Congress. The salary of the Secretary of State for India should be placed on the English estimates. In his Council, consisting of not more than nine members, one-third should be Indians chosen by the non-official members of the various Legislative Councils in India (*hear, hear*), and of the remaining members at least half should be public

men of proved ability and merit (*hear, hear*) unconnected with the Government of India: the functions of the members should be advisory and not executive. A Council so constituted would maintain a fair balance between the different interests involved in Indian administration, and would secure for its decisions that appreciation and willing acceptance wich are essential to all Governments, specially to Governments conducted by a non-indigenous bureaucracy. (*Hear, hear*).

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

Before I pass from this subject, there is one other matter closely allied to which I would call your earnest attention. Royal Commissions may be of great use or may, as some or all commissions do, serve to defer reforms, but there is no question that they collect a vast amount of useful information at very great expense. All this material sleeps on dusty racks. Very few of the men who form the commissions are members of Parliament, and, after the submission of the reports, they are unable to turn to any good and effective purpose the instruction which they have received at such great cost to India. If, instead of Royal Commissions, we had Parliamentary Committees of enquiry, like those that sat in the days of the East India Company on the renewal of its successive Charters, drawn from all parties, we would have a body of men in Parliament who would acquire an interest in India by means of intimate knowledge of her affairs and would be able by reason of independent information to approach the consideration of Indian questions with confidence, and create in the House an atmosphere of enlightenment about India which would continue as a tradition. A system of control and supervision like this would supply the necessary corrective to the Government of India and impart a forward impetus which the British democracy have so far failed to give and which the people of India justly claim. It is a reform to which I have ventured to call your attention, as I believed its usefulness must be recognised by all parties and as it may be treated almost as a non-controversial question. Before I pass on from the

subject referring to what Mr. Samarth has alluded to, I had the privilege of seeing the responsible statesmen on both sides of the House as well as leaders of public opinion in England. I asked them, where were the men like Burke, who had the knowledge which he possessed of Indian affairs and where was the control of the British House of Commons to whose direct control we were transferred in 1858? And I told them that the only method by which that knowledge could be re-introduced into the House of Commons on Indian affairs, the only method by which that House could be instructed on matters relating to Indian politics was by the constitution of a Parliamentary Committee, consisting of men of all shades of opinion and drawn from all parties, who would be instructed about India by means which at present were inaccessible to members of Parliament, and who were the great leading and guiding forces in the old administration of India. I am glad to tell you that that view received the unqualified assent of most men of leading in England, whose advice and support may be of the greatest value to us on a future occasion.

THE WORK BEFORE US

I now come to the second part of my address —the constructive programme of the Congress, its objects and ideals, our duty to ourselves and our work in the future. For a consideration of these matters, the present occasion is not altogether inopportune; we are removed by force of circumstances from the atmosphere of controversy and if we are deeply stirred, I trust there is room for introspection.

WHERE WE STAND TO-DAY

But before I go on to the future, the present must claim our attention for a few moments. The Charter Act of 1833 provides that,

> no native of India, nor any natural-born subject of His Majesty, resident therein, shall by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent or colour or any of them, be disabled from holding any place, office or employment under the said Company.

In the memorable despatch to the Government of India accompanying the Act, the Board of Directors emphasise this provision and say :

> It is fitting that this important provision should be understood in order that its full spirit and intention may be transfused through our whole system of administration. From certain offices the natives are debarred, professedly on the ground that the average amount of native qualifications can be presumed only to rise to a certain limit. It is this line of demarcation which the present enactment obliterates. Fitness is henceforth to be the criterion of eligibility.

Then we come to the solemn declaration of the Great Queen :—

> We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian Territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and those obligations, by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fill.

These form the solid foundations on which the Government of India rests : one removes the disqualification of the subject, the other defines the obligation of the Sovereign. I shall on this occasion refrain from considering how far the injunction of the Boards of Directors, that the spirit and intention of the enactment should be transfused through the whole system of administration, or the solemn declaration of the Sovereign, has been loyally carried out and how wide is the gulf which divides our actual position from our legal status. The Government of the country is still vested to all intents and purposes in a foreign Civil Service which is so recruited that the difficulties attending the path of the Indian, who seeks admission into it, are just as great to-day as they were fifty years ago, as is evident from the fact that out of a cadre of nearly 1,400 members there are now not more than 70 Indian officers. The Service is composed of men whose sole aim is, no doubt, to do their duty and sole ambition is to govern well ; like the knights-errant of old they would take all the load off our shoulders, forgetting that in the economy of nature each man has to carry his own burden, to stiffen his back in self-preservation.

We cannot escape the influences of our tradition or environment. In declining to accede to the grant of further

powers to the English in India, Sir Charles Wood in 1861 quoted with approval the words of a well-known philosopher and statesman: "Armed with prestige of the ruling nation they have the feelings inspired by absolute power without the sense of responsibility." What Mill said then still holds good to-day, for the system of Government is the same, though happier influences have come into play. But the fact remains that the only responsibility which could act and has acted as a check on the Civil Service of India was its self-imposed sense of duty: it is a great check no doubt, but not sufficient when a struggle comes between pre-conceived ideas and right traditions of power and efficiency on the one hand, and the nascent growth of popular aspirations on the other. Viceroys and Governors may come and go, but the great Service remains, dominating the life of the people and practically free from all responsibility except what it owes to itself. They form the Executive Council of the Viceroy, with the exception of one solitary, dumb Indian member of recent origin. They also form the Council of the Secretary of State with the addition of two Indian members. They thus constitute a Court of Appeal over themselves. They furnish rulers to six Provincial Governments out of nine. The great departments of State including education are under their control and the inspiration and the motive power of Government comes from them. Influence, patronage, authority, power, dominion, the government itself, are all in their hands; and they would be more than human if they did not desire to maintain their position, if from no other motive than at least from a laudable ambition of handing on their heritage unimpaired to their successors, and an honest belief that the Service as constituted was essential for the good of India.

WHAT INDIA WANTS

Against this state of things we have a people rapidly awakening to self-consciousness; thousands of our boys are receiving education on Western lines in Indian Universities based on Western models; hundreds of them are daily flocking to the Universities of Europe, America

and Japan and on their return home spreading the knowledge that they have acquired. You may chain Prometheus, but the fire is lighted and cannot be extinguished. (*Hear, hear*). India wants a higher life, a wider sphere of activity and usefulness. India wants that her Government should be consistent with her growing self-respect and intellectuality. India wants that the presumption which has all along existed, and which the Board of Directors in 1833 made a vain attempt to dispel, namely, that the Indians can only rise to a certain limit, should be removed from the precincts of her Court, as it has been from the Statute Book, and the door to her services should not be closed by artificial barriers against her own sons. India wants that her children should have the same rights of equal citizenship as other members of the Empire. (*Hear, hear and applause.*) India wants the removal of vexatious hindrances on the liberty of speech and freedom of the Press, (*hear, hear and applause*) fruitless and dangerous alike to the Government and the people. And, above all, India wants that her Government should be an autonomous Government under the British Empire. (*Applause.*) Then only the great benefits, which have emanated from British rule and which carry with them the memory of doles, will be sweetened with the sweat of her brow.

I know of our aspirations, I have given brief expression to them; are they extravagant and justified in the present circumstances of the country? I do not wish to ride for a fall, but I am of opinion that they are not incapable of progressive fulfilment. Do they deserve fostering care and sympathetic attention or stern repression? The answer has been already given by the Government itself.

THE REFORM OF THE COUNCILS

The Reform Scheme of Lord Morley has been referred to in the past in many Presidential Addresses from the point of view of adverse criticism. I will refer to that scheme from a different standpoint. The Reform Scheme is the beginning of a far reaching change. There is some scepticism in certain quarters: it has become a habit with

some of us to talk of the Reforms as mere make-believes. I deprecate this habit: it is a wrong angle of vision, it lacks the sense of historical perspective. From a Council of three which the Regulating Act of 1773 gave to Warren Hastings, excluding the Commander-in-Chief, we come to a Council of four in 1833, when a Law Member without a portfolio and without the right to vote or sit at meetings except when laws were enacted, was added. The next step forward was a Legislative Council of ten in 1853, consisting of 4 ordinary and 6 additional members who were all nominated; and in 1861, the number of additional members was raised to a maximum of twelve, also all nominated. Then, through the continuous agitation of the Congress, backed by the powerful influence and energy of Charles Bradlaugh, came Lord Cross' Act of 1892 which would have been entirely different if Bradlaugh had then been alive, and which gave to our various Provincial Councils the right of recommendation and for the first time allowed interpretations and discussion of the financial statement. From this stage we travelled far indeed in 1909, when the number of additional members in the Legislative Council of the Governor-General was raised to 60 of whom 27 were elected, the remaining 33 being nominated, and amongst those nominated not more than 28 could be officials. There was not only to be a discussion on the financial statement, but the Budget was to be presented in all its stages, power was given to the Council to move resolutions which might affect the administration of the country, and the right of interpellation was greatly extended. And these Councils have not been without their use. They have supplied the motive force where it was lacking, they have infused energy where it was needed, they have attempted to act, though not always with success, as a brake when the wheels of the State were running over slippery rails and they have corrected errors: what is more, they have made their influence felt on the administrative machinery of Government. Apart from the official majority in the Imperial Council, which having regard to its present constitution, could be safely dispensed with, the greatest drawback of all the Councils is

the defective and unequal representation of the educated classes in India. But even such as they are, with the composite, restricted and unequal character of their representation the Indian non-official members gave a solid and united vote on some of the great questions affecting the prestige and position of India or its internal administration. On the question affecting the prestige and position of India regarding emigration, the Sikh and the Bengalee, the Mahratta and the Madrassee, the prince and the commoner, as well as the Hindu and the Moslem, all voted on the same side; so also on the question of the separation of judicial and executive functions. In Bengal and Madras, they have actually defeated the Government on important issues.

I have dwelt at some length on the Councils that we have got under the Reform Scheme of Lord Morley to show that they are not altogether so useless as is sometimes inconsiderately asserted. They are, no doubt, very far from being the ideals of to-day, but they mark a notable advance, and it is undesirable and unwise to treat them as make-believes. Let us treat them as mere steps which we must take to reach our goal and let us consider what that goal may be: and in putting this goal before us, let us be frank and honest and let us understand each other and be understood. It is well that there should be *arriere pensee*, no reservation in the consideration of this great question.

PERPETUAL TUTELAGE ON THE ONE HAND

The Indian bureaucracy do not offer us any constructive programme for the future of India, no land of promise to her children. They are content to work for the day and take no thought for the morrow. An autocratic Viceroy or Secretary of State may put extra steam into the machinery of the Indian Government or try to shut the safety-valve, but the great fly wheel is not easily disturbed. And the bureaucracy have given us honest and conscientious workmen, not troubled, it may be, with the visions of the future,

but they have reason to be well-pleased with their work: they have given us internal peace and guarded us from external aggression; the blessings of an ordered administration are apparent on every side. Why should India resent? Her Government has always been that of one man's sway whether she was an Empire or broken into small States of varying dimensions. Why should she object to the Government of an outside bureaucracy? My answer is: the days of the lotus-eater are gone, (*hear, hear*) the world is swinging onward on the uplifting ropes of time, and in Europe, the war of nations, now in progress, will knock off the last weights of mediaeval domination of one man over many, of one race over another (*applause*); it is not possible to roll back the tide of wider life which is flowing like the warm gulf stream through the gateways of the West into the still waters of the East. You may abolish the study of English history and draw a sponge over all its enthralling story of freedom; you may bar Milton and Burke, Mill and Spenser; you may bend the Indian Universities to your will if you like, fetter their feet with obstructive statutes, but you cannot bar the imponderable influences of an expanding world. (*Applause*). If English rule in India meant the canonisation of a bureaucracy, if it meant perpetual domination and perpetual tutelage, an increasing dead-weight on the soul of India, it would be a curse to civilization and a blot on humanity. (*Hear, hear*). But I am doing injustice to a large body of Civil Servants who have loyally accepted the recent reforms and who seek to remain true to the traditions of Munro and Elphinstone. (*Applause*).

AND INDEPENDENCE ON THE OTHER

And let us take the other extreme—of separation from England and absolute independence. It may, no doubt, commend itself to the ardent patriotism of youth, for it is the privilege of youth to be fancy free. Let us leave law alone and deal with the question as one of practical politics. I would not hesitate—my friend said

that I was near the doors of deportation—whatever might be the terrors of the law, from boldly accepting the ideal if I felt, convinced that it was possible of attainment, and I go further, that it was desirable in the present stage of our evolution. I would not flee from my own convictions. I do not like the attitude of being willing to wound but afraid to strike. Let us be frank. Bold issues must be boldly faced. National regeneration requires manliness and is not advanced by the methods of the Camarilla. (*Hear, hear.*) At the present moment, who would desire or support separation from England? The Indian princes secure in their dignity and status, the Indian aristocracy safe in their possessions and influence, the Indian middle classes free in their vocations, the toiling masses sure of the fruits of their labour, are all moving onwards to one common goal with the impetus which a central Government, a common vehicle of thought, common ideals and a growing sense of unity and nationality have given them. Will they support this separation and lose sight of their goal altogether? India, high and low, has published her answer to the world. It is but a dream and may come, as dreams do come, when the senses are held in the bonds of sleep, or as they come in the impetuous days of youth when the senses lack the control of wisdom which comes with age. But when you take the idea firmly into your grasp, it breaks away into the dust of the past bringing no solace but disappointment and sorrow.

SELF-GOVERNMENT WITHIN THE EMPIRE

The two extremes—the one of separation, the other of subordination—are both equally impossible and must be put out of our mind. The ideal that we must pursue, and which the Congress has set before itself, is that of co-ordination and comradeship, of a joint partnership on equal terms. (*Hear, hear.*) I do not say that it must materialize to-day, but I do say that every step that we take, or ask the Government to take, must point in that direction. India no doubt is a continent and not a country divided into small administrative areas: it is divided into communities, castes and sects; it is divided by religion,

language and race, by different types and stages of civilisation and progress, and by different methods of administration. It has within its limits princes of ancient lineage and traditions, and people great numbers of whom are still in a state of mental darkness; the educated middle classes are still a small, if no longer a microscopic, minority; there are peoples within its borders who know of nothing else but personal rule, and large classes which are ready to accept a representative government. Can any system of self-government be evolved in a country like this which will bring into coherence its heterogeneous elements, or must India from the very nature of its constitution be for ever subject to outside dominion? I hope I have stated the case for the other side fairly. Let us see how we can apply our ideal to a state of things like this: let us clearly realise what that ideal may be. From the very extent of India and the diversity of her population, we must have a system of Government modelled on the lines of the Commonwealth of Australia, or the United States of America, modified according to Indian conditions and presided over by a representative of our Sovereign. In this constitution all will find a place, the Englishman as well as the Indian, the prince as well as the peasant, and all communities, by a judicious combination of the methods of election and selection in the case of the less advanced. I am only suggesting tentative lines of development and not a scheme, and I am aware that it may be laughed at as chimerical; but I shall not complain, as criticism is the touch-stone of truth. And I do not despair, for the position is not hopeless.

INDIA OF TO-DAY AND ENGLAND OF THE PAST

Let us consider our advantages. I might easily turn for analogies to the continent of Europe, but, for the present, I shall direct attention to England of the past, and not a remote past, to England in the forties in the 19th century after the accession of Queen Victoria and the great Reform Act of 1832. In many parts, half of its male population and nearly three-fourths of the female population were unable to sign their names even on their

marriage register. The test of literacy in India to-day is certainly as high among the higher classes, and taking the entire male population, children, hill-tribes and aborigines all thrown in, more then 1 in 10 are able to read and write. Religious differences carried then in England a more galling sense of social and political disadvantage than they have ever done in India. Even in Ireland, Roman Catholics were not allowed to hold commissions in the Army until 1793, when an Act was passed enabling them to hold commissions in the Army up to the rank of a colonel, and this restricted concession was not granted to the Roman Catholics in England until 1813. It was not till 1829 that Parliament was opened to them. The Protestant Dissenters likewise laboured under cruel restrictions: they could not legally baptise their children in their own places of worship or bury their dead in consecrated grounds, except under the ritual of the Established Church, and they had no admission to the Universities. Many of us will remember that in 1880 an influential deputation waited on Gladstone to protest against the appointment of Lord Ripon as our Viceroy, because he was a Roman Catholic. Even to-day the whole question of Irish Home Rule is a question of religion, of the Protestant against the Roman Catholic; each of the great communities had organised themselves into armed forces under the leadership of eminent politicians and were ready for a civil war before the outbreak of the greater war. Is the condition of things worse in India at the present time? Hindus and Moslems had long lived in amity until it was found that their differences might be turned to their mutual disadvantage. I am not drawing upon imagination. It attracted the attention of a historian and statesman like Lord Bryce, who, in one of his illuminating essays, observed as follows:—

> It has been suggested that when the differences of caste and religion which now separate the people of India from one another have begun to disappear. . . . . new dangers may arise to threaten the permanence of British Power.

British administrators, happily, and Mussalmans and Hindus themselves, are beginning to realise that these

differences mean danger to the State and injury to the whole community.

The cry is raised that not only is there difference in religion, but that in a country like India, so wide and diversified, proper representation cannot be secured. Take again the case of England before the Reform Act. Prior to 1832, to the British House of Commons 70 members were returned by 35 places practically without any electors ; 90 members were returned by 46 places with less than 50 electors and 37 members by 19 places having not more than 100 electors, while Leeds, Birmingham and Manchester were unrepresented : seats were secured by bribery and when they rested with proprietors and corporations, were openly sold : in fact corruption was so rampant that buying a seat was considered perfectly fair. Sir Samuel Romilly, than whom a purer and more virtuous public man was not to be found in his day, actually bought his seat in the House of Commons so that he might be independent of any patron. The difficulty of language need not be considered. In England of the early 19th century there was a diversity of tongues greater than what exists in a similar area in India. The greatest gift of England to India is a common vehicle of thought between the different parts of India and the members of its different communities.

It may also be urged against us that the higher castes in India, the educated communities, will dominate the lower and the more ignorant. The House of Commons was practically in the hands of the English aristocracy and the upper middle classes till 1832, and to this day it is, to all intents and purposes, a house composed of members belonging to those classes. In politics, Anglo-Indian administrators are known to be inclined to the conservative view, which fought so strenuously against the curtailment of the rights of the Peers. After all, the spectacle of the more enlightened ruling the less enlightened in the same community is as old as the world. The caste system in India, which is thoroughly democratic within itself, is losing its rigidity as between different castes.

ITALY AND JAPAN

I may go further afield and nearer home. Italy in 1860 was more divided in tradition, sentiment and feeling than India is to-day or was at any time in its past history. Conflict between temporal and spiritual powers, rivalry of cities and states, of republics and kingdoms, mutual jealousies and mutual hatred, the domination and intrigue of a powerful neighbour, these were the difficulties which stood in the way of Italy, since united under one Government. And take Japan of 1860.

The Emperor was the nominal King but the Shogun the actual ruler; a third of the whole Empire was under the direct rule of the Shogun and the revenues were paid into his treasury; the remainder was shared among 260 feudal lords, all of whom enjoyed complete legislative and executive autonomy including the right of coinage. The Daimio and the Samurai who combined to form the governing and aristocratic classes numbered two million souls. Beneath them lay the masses divided by an unfathomable social gulf, across which none could pass, divided into three orders, farmers, artisans and traders, in number about 30 millions, whose sole lot in life was to minister to the well-being and luxury of their superiors. Slavery, abject slavery, was the natural state of the great body of the people. They counted for nothing; their liberty, their property and even their lives were held at the absolute disposal of their immediate rulers: they spoke in subdued tones with bent backs and eyes on the ground. As subjection made the lower classes abjectly servile, so did despotic power and immunity from all the burthens of life render the aristocratic class tyrannical and cruel.

I have not indulged in a fanciful portrayal of the condition of the people of Japan in the closing years of the Takagwa regime. I have quoted verbatim from a well-known English work on Japan. India does not suffer very much in comparison with England of the 18th or early 19th century, and stands on a much better footing than Italy or Japan in 1860. I have stated the objections and have tried to meet them. Do not for a moment think, therefore, that I underrate their importance. I have not shrunk from pointing out the difficulties. To show that the obstacles in our way are not insuperable, I have referred to other countries, not dissimilarly situated; what we in India want is their patriotism, their devotion, their spirit of sacrifice. In Japan, the Shogun surrendered his

absolute authority, the Feudal Lords gave up their estates and power, the Daimio and Samurai laid aside the pride of birth and caste, the upper classes from the Emperor downwards helped to bring the masses across the wide gulf which for untold centuries had run between them, taking them by the hand as fellow-creatures with equal rights, and thus laid the foundation of a nation which has compelled the attention and respect of the world.

What others have done we may do: the basis of our life, political and social, must be self-respect and mutual good-will. It has been said that treated as we are by our own Government, lacking in sympathy and trust, it is no wonder if we slide down the pegs of national self-esteem. I have already referred to the growing consciousness of the people, to their vivid perception of the anomalies of our present position—equal subjects of our Sovereign, but unequal citizens of the State. (*Applause*). The waves of a new life, bright with the hopes of the future, fall back into empty form, repelled by the cold wall of ancient prejudice. Signs, however, are not wanting to show that the guardians of the wall are beginning to realise that the waves are friendly, and will bring to the land waters which will fertilise into abounding life and they are opening the sluice-gates. Not so slowly, not so cautiously, is the cry from the land.

LORD HARDINGE'S POLICY OF TRUST

Lord Hardinge has set the example of courage and trust; he has tried to show that the Government of India is a Government for the people: he has spoken in vindication of our rights of equal citizenship, he has endorsed the action of our countrymen in South Africa in offering and organising passive resistance; he has upheld the claims of India against the bigotry of race and prejudice of colour and he has stood by India ready to guard her honour. All honour to him for his courageous advocacy of the cause of India (*applause*) under circumstances of exceptional difficulty in South Africa. I do not know if His Excellency realises what he has done for us and for England; he has

revived our waning faith in the declaration of our Sovereign, in the policy of British Rule in India and, what is more, he has made the Indian people recognise that the self-respect of the nation is safe in his keeping. (*Hear, hear.*) In his support of our rights in South Africa he has been ably seconded by Sir Benjamin Robertson who has won a victory for us where defeat would have been disastrous; to him also our thanks are due. But more is wanted, for much is wanting in those elements which constitute the self-respect of a people.

THE RIGHT TO CARRY ARMS

The right to carry arms, the right to bear commissions in the Army and lead our men in the cause of the Empire, the right to form volunteer corps in the defence of hearth and home, how long will these be denied to the Indian people? How long will India toddle on her feet, tied to the apron strings of England? Time it is that she stood on her legs for herself as well as for England. (*Applause.*) What could be more humiliating to India and to England alike, if England were obliged in the hour of some great danger, as Imperial Rome was in her day, to leave India unarmed and untrained to the use of arms, and as her civil population is, a prey to internal anarchy and external aggression? (*Hear, hear.*) What commentary would it be on 150 years of British rule in India, that England found the people strong though disunited and left them helpless and emasculated? (*Applause*). And, on the other hand, what could be more glorious both for India and England than that India, strong in her men, strong in her faith, should stand side by side with England, share her troubles and her dangers and be joint defenders of their common heritage. (*Applause*).

INDIA A WALL AGAINST GERMANY

Brother-delegates, there is no use in vain regrets, but one cannot help thinking that under different circumstances, England could have put to-day on the battle-fields of Europe not seventy thousand Indian soldiers, but a wall of men against which German militarism would have hurled

itself in vain. (*Applause*). And has not India justified the faith in her? In this hour of danger the cry has come from every part of India—from all communities and classes—for a rush to the front: it is oblivious of the past and impregnate with the future. And may I, as your spokesman, and as the President of this Congress, addressing myself to Lord Hardinge, tell him that this future is in his hands, that it will be a glory all his own unparalleled in history, if India realises this future before he lays down his office: my appeal to him is not in the name of personal glory, it will be glory to the Most High, for future generations in India and England will bless his name, for he will have done incalculable good to both. And this is not an appeal *ad misericordiam*. We stand at the bar of humanity and claim the fulfilment of obligations, of declarations and solemn pledges. It is the appeal of Belgium for the enforcement of her guaranteed rights. (*Hear, hear, and applause.*) England is pouring forth her wealth, and what is more, what no wealth can buy, the precious blood of her men for the fulfilment of her plighted word: her name will live as long as human history lives. Will India say that England has failed in her duty to India? It is not a prayer, but a call in the name of the people of India, enforcec by the moral sense of mankind, which, if religions are not mere myths and their teachings empty shibboleths, will survive the clash of arms and the fate of nations. (*Applause*). But, brother-delegates, I shall be failing in my duty if I failed to indicate, however briefly, what lies in us to do for the realisation of our destined future.

EDUCATION

Our groundwork must be the education of our people, the elevation of the masses. To our infinite regret, the State has not responded to our call for even a tentative measure of compulsory, primary education. Much as I grieve, I am not hopeless, for it is bound to come. It was not till 1880 that England recognised that no children should be shut out from the benefits of education by the ignorance, neglect or apathy of their parents. Our policy has been to follow the lead of England at a respectful distance. The education

of our girls is still in an elementary stage. The Congress may well take a leaf out of the programme of the Moslem League in matters connected with education, for education is the bedrock on which we must lay the foundations of our national life. To it alone, I look for the removal of those galling distinctions resulting from the institution of caste, of those petty misunderstandings which mar the beauty and serenity of our religious life. What does it matter if I spring from the head of the Creator or His feet? Is not the whole universe His foot-stool? And what does formula matter in religion? God reveals Himself to all who seek Him. Whether we hearken to the voice of the Muezzin, or to the pealing of the bells, whether the minaret of the trident attracts our gaze, whether we assemble in our temples or our mosques, whether we are high or lowly born, it makes no difference: outside these, beyond these, is the sanctuary of the mother, where the voice of humanity is calling us to worship. (*Applause*). There we stand united before her sacred altar with our feet on the past and our gaze on the future. If only we bear in mind that we are Indians first and Indians always, what does it matter whether one community advances more rapidly than another, whether one receives more favours than another? (*Hear, hear.*) Let us bear in mind that the advancement of a part of the body-politic means the progress of the whole, that favours to our brethren mean favours to us all; it is the pettiest of petty things that come between us, though these small things, like the grain of sand in the eye, oftentimes cause great irritation. Let us brush them aside. Enlightened opinion, Hindu and Moslem, is recognizing the essential unity of our lives and striving to put down differences where they exist: these differences are capable of easy adjustment if only we bear and forbear. (*Hear, hear*).

STATE AID TO INDIAN INDUSTRIES

We are face to face with our great constructive work, the education and elevation of our people and the obliteration of the lines of caste and creed in the social and political life of the country. And our efforts should not be

confined to these regions alone ; we have much to do in the domain of arts and industries ; we must devote our best attention and energy to our industrial education and progress. We have had difficulties to contend with in the past; our Government, following the traditions of England, the richest and most highly developed industrial country in the world, omitted to profit by the examples of the Governments of some of the countries on the continent of Europe and of Japan, which have succeeded in planting great industries among nations hitherto as much devoted to agricultural pursuits as ourselves The war has forced on our attention new problems and new methods and the example lately set by England in coming to the support of the newly started dyeing industry fills us with hope as to the future of the industries that may with advantage be started in India with the aid of the State. (*Hear, hear*).

WORK IN ENGLAND

And if, brother-delegates, I naturally lay the greatest stress on the work among ourselves, I do not forget the work we have to do outside, work of no ordinary magnitude or importance—the enlightenment of the British people about Indian affairs. In them we have got our best allies, for they have not come under the influence of the Pousta which grows on the soil of the East. They are under no illusion, they realise the great truth underlying the dictum of that great statesman who gave peace to South Africa : "Good government could never be a substitute for government by the people themselves." (*Applause.*) I have always found them, and I speak from personal experience, willing to listen and ready to help. Being on the spot, your Deputation was able to correct errors and influence public opinion. Though addresses from the platform are useful, much work may be done quietly in England through the leaders of thought and through the Press.

THE BRITISH COMMITTEE

The British Committee of the Congress is doing invaluable work in instructing the press and the public.

What is wanted is that representative men from India should systematically visit England to bring to the Committee fresh and first-hand knowledge : what is urgently wanted is more funds so that the Committee may extend its sphere of usefulness : and money spent for this purpose will not be ill spent : it is an investment which will bring rich profit. It may not be generally known, but it was through the influence exerted on John Bright by a retired Anglo-Indian gentleman of liberal views—all honour to him—that India secured in 1858 the *Magna Charta* of her rights. It is essential that members of Parliament, the Assembly which alone can decide great questions, should be properly instructed, for, knowledge means interest, and all we want is a true knowledge of India. If the future to which we look forward is to be a process of peaceful evolution, it must be by co-operation. Hostility will retard and indifference clog the wheels of progress.

OUR PLACE IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE

The war has come to us as a trumpet call—it has roused enthusiasm in England for India, it has moved the heart of Anglo-India and has even drawn the British Colonies out of their exclusiveness. Our Viceroy has been telling us of the formation of a new policy of reciprocity between India and the Colonies. No reciprocity except on terms of equality would be acceptable to India. (*Hear, hear.*) Would the Colonies give it? Not in the past, but now there is hope of a settlement consistent with our position in the Empire, for this is what a leading organ of public opinion in South Australia says :—

> It was only ignorance that thought of the Indians as an inferior race. They are the equals, fully the equals, of the proudest European Nation, and they claim, in their own land to be free citizens governing themselves, and shaping their own National destiny, within the many-nationed 'Empire of the Free.' Who shall say them nay?

Now is our time : we must throw away our lethargy : let us bind our waist-cloth on and head forward to our goal and that goal is not unworthy of our

highest aspirations: it has satisfied the dignity and the self-esteem of the French in Canada, and of the Boer in South Africa, who to-day are the staunchest supporters of England: and when it comes to us, as I am sure it soon will, it will strengthen and not weaken the bonds that unite England and India. To the spiritual framework of the East has come the inspiration of the West. Let us combine the patience of the East with the energy of the West and we shall not fail. We are better situated to-day than Italy or Japan was in 1860: we are beginning to feel the strength and growing solidarity of the people of India: India has realised that she must be a vital and equal part of the Empire and she has worthily seized her great opportunity. In the melting pot of destiny, race, creed, and colour are disappearing. If India has realised this, so has England. Through the mouth of the Prime Minister, the English people have said to us:

> We welcome with appreciation and affection your proferred aid, and in an Empire which knows no distinction of race or class, where all alike are subjects of the King-Emperor and are joint and equal custodians of our common interest and futures, we here hail with profound and heart-felt gratitude your association side by side and shoulder to shoulder with the Home and Dominion troops, under a flag which has a symbol to all of a unity that a world in arms cannot dissever or dissolve.

Brother-delegates, it is no use looking backward; no use in vain regrets. Let us be ready for the future, and I visualise it. I see my country occupying an honoured and proud place in the comity of nations. I see her sons sitting in the Councils of our great Empire, conscious of their strength and bearing its burden on their shoulders as valued and trusted comrades and friends, and I see India rejuvenated and re-incarnate in the glories of the future broadened by the halo of the past. What does it matter if a solitary raven croak, from the sand banks of the Jumna and the Ganges? I hear it not, my ears are filled with the music of the mighty rivers, flowing into the sea scattering the message of the future. Brother-delegates, let us live as the ancients lived in the purity of

heart so that the message may be fulfilled; let us forget the barriers of man's creation; let us be humble and forget the pride of self; let us step across the barriers narrow of prejudice; let us always be with our hand on the plough, preparing the soil for the harvest of the future; let our heart-strings be attuned to God and Country and then no power on earth can resist the realisation of that message, the fulfilment of the Destiny that is ours. And assembled in this tabernacle of the people, let us pray to Him, Who knoweth all hearts, to grant us grace and strength that we may deserve and bear this future and this destiny. (*Loud and continued applause.*)

Thirtieth Congress—Bombay—1915

HON. SIR SATYENDRA PRASANNA SINHA

BROTHER-Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I return you my profoundest acknowledgment of gratitude for the high and honourable position to which you have called me. It is a peculiarly responsible position, for this year the task of delivering the annual message of the Indian National Congress is beset with special difficulties. The atmosphere created by the titanic struggle, overshadowing the entire civilised world, is not helpful to the calm and dispassionate consideration of our many complex and delicate national problems. And my task is made all the more difficult as the cruel hand of death has removed from our midst, within a few months of each other, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Pherozeshah Mehta and Henry Cotton—three of our most beloved and sagacious leaders whose counsels would have been of incalculable value to us to-day and whose loss we all so deeply mourn.

Would that this task had been committed to some one more competent than myself. Willingly would I have avoided it,—gladly would I have remained for the rest of my life, as I have been in the past, a humble camp-follower of the Congress.

You know that I did not seek this position any more than I had sought that other exalted position which it fell to my lot to occupy, a few years ago, as the first Indian member of the Viceroy's Executive Council. I pray I may not be misunderstood, for I say this in no boastful spirit but in all humility. For no one is more conscious than myself that my appointment

as Law Member was not due to any extraordinary personal merits of mine. No one knows it better than myself that that honour was conferred not so much on me personally as on the Indian National Congress (*applause*), in recognition of the justice and moderation of the claims it had persistently put forward for over a quarter of a century on behalf of the people of India.

For myself, I had never dared to aspire to the chair of Macaulay and Maine any more than I ever dreamt of occupying this chair hallowed by its association with some of the most devoted workers in the cause of our Motherland. In both cases, I yielded to a sense of supreme duty. And on this occasion, I cannot do better than what I did on the other, *viz.*, to invoke aid from on High that I may do nothing and say nothing which will compromise the rights and best interests, the honour and the dignity, of my country. (*Applause.*)

THE KING-EMPEROR

My first duty to-day is again to lay at the feet of our august and beloved Sovereign our unswerving fealty, our unshaken allegiance, and our enthusiastic homage. His Majesty has been with our soldiers on the battlefield. His son shares with them all the hardships of war. And we desire to express our gratitude to Almighty God for shielding our beloved Emperor and enabling him to endure with fortitude the physical suffering inseparable from his recent accident and restoring him to devoted people in renewed health and strength. (*Applause.*) Long may he live to lead his people and promote their happiness and prosperity. (*Hear, hear.*)

THE WAR

The question which, above all others, is engrossing our minds at the present moment is the war, and the supreme feeling which arises in our minds is one of deep admiration for the self-imposed burden which England is bearing in the struggle for liberty and freedom, and a feeling of profound pride that India had not fallen behind other

portions of the British Empire, but has stood shoulder to shoulder with them by the side of the Imperial Mother in the hour of her sorest trial. In the great galaxy of heroes, in the imperishable Roll of Honour, there are now, and there will never cease to be, beloved Indian names testifying to the fact that our people would rather die unsullied than outlive the disgrace of surrender to a bastard civilisation. (*Hear, hear.*) Our conviction is firm that, by the guidance of that divine spirit which shapes the destiny of nations, the cause of right will ultimately prevail and the close of the struggle will usher in a new era in the history of the human race.

Brother-delegates, my next duty is to convey our unstinted admiration and our heart-felt gratitude to those of our brethren who have been shedding their blood in the battle-fields of Europe, Asia and Africa, in defence of the Empire. (*Applause.*) The war has given India an opportunity, as nothing else could have done, of demonstrating the courage, bravery and tenacity of her troops, even when pitted against the best organised armies of the world, and also the capacity of her sons of all classes, creeds and nationalities to rise as one people under the stimulus of an overpowering emotion. That the wave of loyalty which swept over India has touched the hearts of all classes has been ungrudgingly admitted even by unfriendly critics. The Bengalee is just as anxious to fight under the banner of His Majesty the King-Emperor as the Sikh and the Pathan, and those of them to whom an opportunity has been given to serve either in ambulance, postal or despatch work, have shown as great a disregard of danger and devotion to duty as others employed in the more arduous work of fighting. India has arisen to the occasion, and her princes and peoples have vied with each other in rallying round the imperial standard at a time when the enemies of the Empire counted on disaffection and internal troubles. The spectacle affords a striking proof as much of the wisdom of those statesmen who have, in recent years, guided the destiny of the British Empire in India as of the fitness of the Indian people to grasp the

dignity and the responsibilities of citizenship of a world-wide Empire. Nor must we forget to tender to the families of those who have laid down their lives in the glorious cause our sincere and respectful sympathy.

Brother-delegates, doubts have been expressed in some quarters as to the wisdom of the Congress assembling while the war is still going on. It has been suggested that discussion of political problems might be misconstrued as an attempt to advance individual national interests at a time of imperial stress. I do not think that such apprehensions are well-founded. If we had any doubt as to the ultimate success of England, we might well hesitate to discuss questions which can only arise after the war is over and peace is concluded. We want to make it perfectly clear, if we have not done so already, that there is no one among us willing to cause the slightest embarrassment to the Government. We seek to make no capital out of the service so ungrudgingly rendered by our countrymen to the Empire. There is not, I trust, a single person in our camp who expects reforms as the price or the reward of our loyalty. That loyalty would indeed be a poor thing if it proceeded from a lively sense of favours to come. Nor could any serious and responsible Indian publicist advocate that, as the result of the war, there should be a sudden and violent breakage in the evolution of political institutions in India. The problem before us is how, without asking for any violent departure from the line of constitutional development which far-sighted statesmen, English and Indian, desire for India, we can still press for a substantial advance towards the development of free institutions in this country. It is our earnest hope that the spontaneous outburst of loyalty throughout the country has dispelled for ever all sense of distrust and suspicion between ourselves and our rulers, and that, after the war is over, British officials will consider it their duty not so much to administer our affairs efficiently as to train the people themselves to administer them, and that, with this change of spirit, the people also will begin to look upon these officials as zealous co-adjutors in the task of their political self-development.

Brother-delegates, this brings me naturally to what has been a burning topic in the Congress for many years, which has led to bitter differences and fierce dissensions, and with regard to which you are entitled to ask my views—our political ideal, our duties in the present, and our prospects in the future.

OUR IDEAL: SELF-GOVERNMENT

What, to begin with, should be the political ideal of India? To some, the raising of this question may seem to be unnecessary and at best academic and, to others, positively mischievous. To me, however, it seems that the greatest danger in the path of the future well-being of the country is the want of a reasoned ideal of our future such as would satisfy the aspirations and ambitions of the rising generations of India and at the same time meet with the approval of those to whose hands our destinies are committed. It is my belief that a rational and inspiring ideal will arrest the insidious and corrupting influence of the real enemies of our Motherland, even if it is not able to root out from the land that malignant mental disease which has been called anarchism and whose psychology it is so difficult to analyse. It must be obvious to all sincere and impartial judges that no mandate whether of the Government or of the Congress, will be able to still the throbbing pain in the soul of awakening India, unless the ideal which is held up by the Congress and accepted by the Government commends itself first to the heart and then to the head. It seems to me, brother-delegates, that the only satisfactory form of self-government to which India aspires cannot be anything short of what President Lincoln so pithily described as "government of the people, for the people, and *by the people*." (*Applause.*)

When I say this, I do not for one moment imply that the British Government is not the best Government we have had for ages. We have only to look round to see the manifold blessings which have been brought to this country by that Government. But as a British Premier early in this century very truly observed, "good government

cannot be a substitute for self-government." (*Applause.*) Says a recent writer in a well-known British periodical:

> Every Englishman is aware that on no account, not if he were to be governed by an angel from heaven, would he surrender that most sacred of all his rights, the right of making his own laws. . . . . He would not be an Englishman, he would not be able to look English fields and trees in the face, if he had parted with that right. Laws in themselves have never counted for much. There have been beneficent despots and wise law-givers in all ages who have increased the prosperity and probably the contentment and happiness of their subjects, but yet their government has not stimulated the moral and intellectual capacity latent in citizenship or fortified its character or enlarged its understanding. There is more hope for the future of mankind in the least and faintest impulse towards self-help, self-realisation, self-redemption than in any of the laws that Aristotle ever dreamt of.

The ideal, therefore, of self-government is one that is not based merely on emotion and sentiment, but on all the lessons of history.

I believe in all sincerity that such has been the ideal which the British Government itself has entertained and cherished almost from the commencement of British rule in India. Generations of statesmen have repeatedly laid down that policy, solemn declarations of successive sovereigns have graciously endorsed it, and Acts of Parliament have given it legislative sanction. I will not burden my speech with quotations from these: they will all be found in previous Presidential addresses. But with your leave, I will quote only one passage from a speech of John Bright delivered at Manchester on the 11th of December, 1877:

> "I believe it" said John Bright, "that it is our duty not only to govern India well now for our sakes and to satisfy our own conscience, but so to arrange its government and so to administer it that we should look forward to the time when India will have to take up her own government and administer it in her own fashion (*applause*). I say he is no statesman—he is no man actuated with a high moral sense with regard to our great and terrible moral responsibility—who is not willing thus to look ahead and thus to prepare for circumstances which may come sooner than we think and sooner than any of us hope for, but which must come at some not very distant date."

It is, however, unfortunately the fact that a few years ago unhappy statements and even action of responsible statesmen gave rise to a widespread suspicion among large classes of people in all parts of India that there was a change of policy—a deliberate intention to retrace the steps. That this suspicion is not wholly without foundation will appear from the estimate of an eminent French publicist who cannot be charged with either lack of admiration for the British administration of India or an excess of sympathy for the Indian reform party. This is what M. Chailley says (I am reading from page 188 of the translation by the present Finance Member, Sir William Meyer):

> Had England taken as her motto 'India for the Indians', had she continued following the ideas of Elphinstone and Malcolm to consider her rule as temporary, she might without inconsistency grant to the national party gradual and increasing concessions which in time would give entire autonomy to the Indians, *but that is not now her aim.* (The italics are mine.)

Does any reasonable man imagine that it is possible to satisfy the palpitating hearts of the thousands of young men who, to use the classic words of Lord Morely, "leave our universities intoxicated with the ideas of freedom, nationality and self-government," with the comfortless assurance that free institutions are the special privilege of the West? Can any one wonder that many of those young men, who have not the same robust faith in the integrity and benevolence of England as the members of this Congress, should lose heart at the mere suspicion of such a policy, and driven to despair, conclude that "the roar and scream of confusion and carnage" is better than peace and order without even the distant prospect of freedom? Fifteen years ago, Lord Morely said:

> The sacred word 'free' represents, as Englishmen have thought until to-day, the noblest aspiration that can animate the breast of man.

And to-day, millions of Englishmen are freely sacrificing their lives in order that others may be free; therefore, an Englishman will be the first person to realise and appreciate the great insistent desire in the heart of

India, and I for myself say with all the emphasis and earnestness that I can command that if the noble policy of Malcolm and Elphinstone, Canning and Ripon, Bright and Morley, is not steadily, consistently and unflinchingly adhered to, the moderate party amongst us will soon be depleted of all that is fine and noble in human character. (*Applause.*) For my part, I believe with the fervour of religious conviction that that wise and righteous policy is still the policy of the great English nation. When His Majesty sent us his gracious message of sympathy and later on of hope, what do you think he meant but sympathy for our political aspirations and hope for their ultimate fulfilment? As late as the 8th day of October, this year, His Excellency the Viceroy, addressing a large number of representative officials at the United Service Club of Simla, said:—

> England has instilled into this country the culture and civilisation of the West with all its ideals of liberty and self-respect. It is not enough for her now to consider only the material outlook of India. It is necessary for her to cherish the aspirations, of which she herself has sown the seed, and English officials are gradually awakening to the fact that high as were the aims and remarkable the achievements of their predecessors, a still nobler task lies before them in the present and the future in guiding the uncertain and faltering steps of Indian development along sure and safe paths. The new role of guide, philosopher and friend is opening before you and it is worthy of your greatest efforts. It requires in you gifts of imagination and sympathy, and imposes upon you self-sacrifice, for it means that slowly but surely you must divest yourselves of some of the power you have hitherto wielded. Let it be realised that great as has been England's mission in the past, she has a far more glorious task to fulfil in the future, in encouraging and guiding the political self-development of the people. The goal to which India may attain is still distant and there may be many vicissitudes in her path, but I look forward with confidence to a time when, strengthened by character and self-respect and bound by ties of affection and gratitude, India may be regarded as a true friend of the Empire and not merely as a trusty dependent. The day for the complete fulfilment of this ideal is not yet, but it is to this distant vista that the British official should turn his eyes, and he must grasp the fact that it is by his future success in this direction that British prestige and efficiency will be judged.

These noble words of Lord Hardinge, which must still be ringing in our ears, are not the idle speculations of

an irresponsible enthusiast, but the well-considered pronouncement of a statesman who, after guiding the ship of state during a period of unprecedented storm and stress, sends forth this message both to his own countrymen and to us. Lest there be any among us of so little faith as to doubt the real meaning of those memorable words, lest there be any Englishmen inclined to whittle down the meaning of this promise, I hope there will be an authentic and definite proclamation with regard to which there will be no evasion, no misunderstanding possible. (*Applause.*) So far as we the people are concerned, there is no real reason for mistrust, for this policy proclaimed so long ago and repeated so recently has been fruitful of innumerable beneficent results. Officials, even the highest, may sometimes have spoken or even acted in a different spirit, but England always did and does still consider it her glorious mission to raise this once great country from her fallen position to her ancient status among the nations of the earth (*applause and "hear, hear"*), and she enjoins every English official in India to consider himself a trustee bound to make over his charge to the rightful owner the moment the latter attains to years of discretion. (*Applause.*)

But are there any among us who, while accepting His Excellency's message of hope, are disposed to demur to the qualification therein expressed, namely, that the goal is not yet? If so, I do not hesitate to express my entire disagreement, because I would sooner take the risk of displeasing than injuring my beloved countrymen. I am fortified in my opinion when I find that almost every prominent leader of the Congress has laboured to impress upon all true lovers of our country that the path is long and devious and that we shall have to tread weary steps before we get to the promised land. "Day will not break the sooner because we get up before the twilight." The end will not come by impatience. I maintain that no true friend of India will place the ideal of Self-Government before us without this necessary qualification. It inevitably makes passionate youth, anxious to avoid the

steep and weary path, take to dangerous and even fatal short-cuts, for it is unfortunately true that impetuous youth finds it easier to die for a glorious ideal than to live and work for it with steady patience and persistent self-sacrifice. I yield to none in my desire for self-government (*applause*) but I recognise that there is a wide gulf between desire and attainment. (*Hear, hear.*)

ONE GOAL, ONE PATH

Let us argue out for ourselves freely and frankly the various ways by which we can obtain the priceless treasure of self-government. It seems to me that it is possible only in one of the three following ways:

First, by way of a free gift from the British nation.

Second, by wresting it from them.

Third, by means of such progressive improvement in our mental, moral and material condition as will, on the one hand, render us worthy of it and, on the other, impossible for our rulers to withold it. (*Applause.*)

Now, as to the first, the free gift. Even if the English nation were willing to make us an immediate free gift of full self-government—and those who differ most from the Congress are the first to deny the existence of such willingness—I take leave to doubt whether the boon would be worth having as such, for it is a commonplace of politics that nations like individual must grow into freedom and nothing is so baneful in political institutions as their prematurity: nor must we forget that India free can never be ancient India restored. Such a vision, as has been justly remarked, could only be realised if India free from the English could have stood in a tranquil solitude or in a sphere of absolute isolation, but unfortunately the hard facts of the modern world have to be faced and India, free from England, but without any real power of resistance, would be immediately in the thick of another struggle of nations.

As to the second, I doubt if the extremist of the extremists consider it feasible to win self-government

immediately by means of a conflict with the British Power. Such a conflict is impossible, if not inconceivable: and I cannot imagine any sane man thinking that assassinations of policemen and dacoities committed on peaceful un-offending citizens will do aught but retard progress towards our goal. (*Hear, hear.*) Such acts, if they proceeded from any considerable section of the people, would only emphasise our absolute incompetence for self-government (*hear, hear*) which demands the highest qualities of patient preparation and of silent and unobtrusive work in every aspect of our social and political life. Fortunately, acts like those I have mentioned are reprobated throughout India. They may appeal to the perverted imagination of misguided youth, but are abhorrent to the sober sense of the great mass of the great peoples of India. They alienate not only the sympathy of those Englishmen whose support would be invaluable to our cause, both in India and England, but they provoke the bitterest resentment among our own people who naturally shrink from an ideal where lawlessness is likely to have sway. On your behalf and my own, I express my utmost and unqualified detestation of these lawless acts, and I fervently appeal to all sections of our people to express in unmistakable language their abhorrence of these dastardly crimes which besmirch the fair fame of our country and I pray to them so to co-operate with the authorities as to render their detection and punishment absolutely certain.

Brother-delegates, we are left, therefore, with the third alternative as the only means of attaining the goal of self-government. Before I deal with it, let me remind you of a parable in Mr. Edwin Bevan's thoughtful little book on *Indian Nationalism*. He likens the condition of our country to that of a man whose whole bodily frame, suffering from severe injuries and grievous lessons, has been put in a steel frame by a skilful surgeon. This renders it necessary for the injured man, as the highest duty to himself, to wait quietly and patiently in splints and bandages—even in a steel frame—until nature resumes her active processes. The knitting of the bones and the granulation of the flesh

require time: perfect quiet and repose, even under the severest pain, is necessary. It will not do to make too great haste to get well. An attempt to walk too soon will only make the matter worse, and, above all, the aid of the surgeon is indispensable and it is foolish to grudge the necessary fee.

When we ourselves have so far advanced under the guidance and protection of England as to be able not only to manage our own domestic affairs, but to secure internal peace and prevent external aggression, I believe that it will be as much the interest as the duty of England to concede the fullest autonomy to India. Political wiseacres tell us that history does not record any precedent in which a foreign nation has, with its own hands, freed from bondage a people which it has itself conquered. I will not pause to point out, what has been pointed out so often, that India was never conquered in the literal sense of the word, and as very properly observed by the late Sir John Seeley, India is not a possession of England in the sense of legally being a tributary to England any more than any of her colonies. I will not wait to examine the cases of French Canada and the Boer Republics in South Africa to whom free institutions have been granted. But has there been a situation before this in the history of mankind like that of India to-day? Has there been a nation whose ideas of political morality have ever reached those of the great English nation? Has there been any another nation which has fought so continuously and strenuously for the freedom and liberty of other nations as the English? My faith is based not on emotion, not on unreasoning sentiment: it rests on the record of what has already been achieved by the undying labours of far-sighted English statesmen and noble-hearted Indian patriots, both those who are still working for the cause and those whose labours are done and whose spirits hover over us to-day and guide and inspire us. The East and the West *have* met—not in vain. The invisible scribe who has been writing the most marvellous history that ever was written has not been idle. Those who have the discernment and inner vision to see

will know that there is only one goal and there is only one path.

The regeneration and reconstruction of India can take place only under the guidance and control of England, and while we admit that the goal is not yet, we refuse to believe that it is so distant as to render it a mere vision of the imagination (*Applause and "hear, hear."*) We deprecate the impatience of those who imagine that we have only to stretch our hands to grasp the coveted prize. But we differ equally from those who think that the end is so remote as to be a negligible factor in the ordinary work of even present-day administration. It seems to me that having fixed our goal, it is hardly necessary to attempt to define in concrete terms the precise relationship that will exist between India and England when the goal is reached. Whatever may be the connection of India with England in the distant future, her impress on India could never be effaced and the inter-communion of the spirit and the breathing of new life into India by England will be a permanent factor which could never be discounted. Autonomy within the Empire is the accepted political faith of the Congress, and I find it difficult to believe that our patriotism and our love of country cannot be reconciled to the picture of the future which generous statesmen like Lord Haldane draw, in which Englishmen and Indians will be fellow-citizens of a common empire and of a common and splendid heritage, all of us bringing our special talents to bear co-operatively for the common good of the whole. For the attainment of this great ideal, our first great duty is the exercise of the difficult but indispensable virtue of patience. There is no royal road to that goal, and we must all patiently, persistently and strenuously co-operate in all measures necessary for that purpose. Some of these can be undertaken only by the Government, others will depend on ourselves alone, but none will bear fruit without a spirit of mutual trust, toleration and forbearance. In order to foster this spirit, so far as we, the people of India are concerned, it is vitally necessary to admit them, in an ever-increasing measure, to

direct and active participation in the higher work of government in all its branches, civil, as well as military, executive as well as judicial, administrative as well as legislative. It is a cruel calumny which asserts that, when asking for the expansion of the powers of our Legislative Councils, for the appointment of Indians to the Imperial and Provincial Executive Councils, for the admission of a larger number of Indians to the Indian Civil Service and all other branches of the higher public services, the Indian National Congress asks only for honors and appointments for the members of the educated classes. It may be that some of those who still persist in repeating this libel on the intelligence and patriotism of this country in good faith believe it to be true. If so, they have failed to take note of well-known facts, namely, that Congress leaders like Telang, Tyabji, Krishnaswamy Iyer and others accepted high office only at considerable personal sacrifice and that others had to refuse because they could not afford to make the necessary sacrifice. These critics have neglected to read the literature of the Congress. In any case, they have missed the point of it all, namely, that these measures are advocated only as means to an end. They are valuable chiefly because they concede the demand of the people for direct and active participation in the work of Government, not merely as tools and agents, but as members of the Government itself. They are valuable only in so far as they tend to identify the people with the Government, and enable them to think of the Government as their own and not as an alien bureaucracy imposed on an unwilling people by a conquering nation. We can afford to treat the taunts of these unfriendly critics with contempt, but there is another school of critics whose counsels are more seductive though not more sound. These insist on the impotence of the Reformed Legislative Councils, whose resolutions they ridicule as mere pious wishes. They see no good in the powers of interpellation and discussion of the Budget. They treat the admission of one Indian into each of the existing Executive Councils as a matter of no consequence, because it has not produced immediate or far-reaching changes in the ordinary routine

of administration. They insist that even a liberal and philosophic historian like Viscount Bryce has pointed out that no more in India than in the Roman Empire has there been any question of establishing free institutions, either for the country as a whole or for any particular Province; and that the Council Reforms of 1861, 1892 and 1909 were merely intended to give opportunities and means for the expression of Indian opinion and not to give any real power to the people. Well, it does not require much political acumen to discover that we in India are yet a long way off from free institutions and that the reforms so far effected have not yielded any real power to the people either in the Imperial or in the Provincial Councils. But it is my firm belief that the privileges already acquired, if used with industry and moderation and tact, will in no distant future receive considerable enlargement, and we must continue to press for further expansion in all the directions I have mentioned, undeterred by the criticism of the one and the cynicism of the other. We shall continue to urge the enlargement of the powers and modifications of the constitution of the Legislative Councils. We shall continue to ask for larger and yet larger admission of Indians to the higher ranks of the public services in all its branches and we shall claim these not as mere concessions but as a gradual fulfilment of solemn pledges for the progressive nationalisation of the government of the country. We shall continue our labours till really free institutions *are* established for the whole of the country (*applause*)—not by any sudden or revolutionary change, but by gradual evolution and cautious progress.

WHAT THE CONGRESS WANTS

When I accepted my nomination for this chair I knew—as all of you must have known—that I was not likely to be able to suggest any specific measures of reform other than those so long advocated by this Congress. But I felt—I trust without undue presumption—that having been in the inner Councils of the Government for however short a time, it was peculiarly my duty to act as your spokesman on this occasion. (*Applause.*) It is in that

belief that I appeal to the British nation to declare their ungrudging approval of the goal to which we aspire, to declare their inflexible resolution to equip India for her journey to that goal and to furnish her escort on the long and weary road. Such a declaration will be the most distinguished way of marking their appreciation of India's services and sacrifices—her loyalty and her dovotion to the Empire. Such a declaration will touch the heart and appeal to the imagination of the people far more than any mere specific political reforms. These latter may fall short of the high expectations raised by utterances of the responsible English statesmen as to the future place of India in the Empire and they may cause general disappointment. But an authoritative declaration of policy on the lines I suggest will, without causing such disappointment, carry conviction to the minds of the people that the pace of the administrative reforms will be reasonably accelerated and that henceforth it will be only a question of patient preparation. The most appropriate opportunity for such a declaration will be the moment when the victory of England and her Allies will establish for ever the triumph of free institutions over old-world doctrines of military absolutism.

Let me not be misunderstood. I do not say that all that is wanted, all that would satisfy us, is a mere declaration of policy: what I do say is that there should be a frank and full statement of the policy of Government as regards the future of India, so that hope may come where despair holds sway and faith where doubt spreads its darkening shadow, and I ask that steps should be taken to move towards self-government by the gradual development of popular control over all departments of Government and by the removal of disabilities and restrictions under which we labour both in our own country and in other parts of the British Empire. (*Applause.*)

I have great pleasure in availing myself of this opportunity to acknowledge with gratitude two recent measures which though not exactly steps towards self-government, amount to some recognition of India's place

in the Empire, The first, thanks to the statesmanlike efforts of Lord Hardinge, is the partial amelioration of the condition of the Indian emigrants in South Africa, and the other is the acceptance by Lord Hardinge's Government of my friend the Hon. Mr. Shafi's resolution for an official representation of India at the Imperial Conference. I would, however, venture to suggest that in addition to the official representative, one or two of the Indian Princes who have rendered such conspicuous service to the Empire might fittingly represent the great Continent of India. The delegation of one or two distinguished Indian Chiefs to the Imperial Conference will, in addition to other honors no doubt in store for them, be a just recognition to their pre-eminent services and will gratify public opinion throughout the length and breadth of India.

Coming to domestic politics, I do not think it necessary that I should, on the present occasion, deal in detail with the various concrete measures which the Congress advocates as an effective advance towards self-government on lines suited to India's special requirements. A decisive advance towards provincial autonomy, the liberalisation of the Council Regulations, establishment of elective as opposed to non-official majorities, an increase of their powers of control, specially in regard to finance, a larger representation of Indians in the various executive Councils as also in the Council of the Secretary of State, the admission of larger numbers of Indians to all the higher branches of the public services, the long-delayed separation of judicial and executive functions, the expansion of primary, scientific and technical education, the abolition of indentured labour and the improvement of the position of Indians in other parts of the Empire—these are reforms which have long been urged and which will be dealt with by you, I have no doubt, so far as you think necessary. I am afraid, however, most of them must stand over for adjustment till peace is in sight. For myself, I will be content with dealing as shortly as I can with three specific matters which have become increasingly urgent and with regard to which there is a practical unanimity of opinion. They are :—

Firstly, the question of commissions in the army and military training for the people.

Secondly, the extension of local self-government.

Thirdly, the development of our commerce and our industries including agriculture.

COMMISSIONS IN THE ARMY AND MILITARY TRAINING

There can be, I venture to think, no true sense of citizenship where there is no sense of responsibility for the defence of one's own country. (*Hear, hear.*)

If there is trouble, others will quiet it down. If there is riot, others will subdue it. If there is a danger, others will face it. If our country is in peril, others will defend it.

When a people feel like this, it indicates that they have got to a stage when all sense of civic responsibility has been crushed out of them (*hear, hear*) and the system which is responsible for this feeling is inconsistent with the self-respect of normal human beings. (*Loud applause.*)

I shall be the first to acknowledge that various steps have been and are being taken by the Government to promote the right spirit of self-help in the country, but I feel and I feel strongly that hitherto the Government has not only ignored but has put positive obstacles ("*shame*") in the way of the people acquiring or retaining a spirit of national self-help in this the most essential respect. (*Applause.*)

For what is the present condition of things? Except certain warlike races like the Sikhs and Rajputs, the people generally are debarred from receiving any kind of military training. Not only are they not allowed enlistment in the ranks of His Majesty's Army, but they are even precluded from joining any volunteer corps. Even with regard to the classes of men—Sikhs and Rajputs, Gurkhas and Pathans, etc.—who are taken into the regular army for the simple reason that the number of English troops is not in itself sufficient to maintain peace and order in this country (*applause*)—even with reference to these classes, it is an

inflexible rule that though they may now obtain the highest badge of valour, *viz.*, the Victoria Cross, not one of them can receive a Commission in His Majesty's Army (*cries of "shame"*) irrespective of birth or bravery, education or efficiency.

While the humblest European and Eurasian and even the West India Negro has the right to carry arms, the law of the land denies even to the most law-abiding and respectable Indian the privilege of possessing or carrying arms of any description except as a matter of special concession and indulgence, often depending on the whim and caprice of unsympathetic officials. (*Applause and "shame".*)

To my mind the mere statement of the present system ought to be sufficient to secure its condemnation.

Let me proceed to state shortly what changes we consider essential to remedy this state of things.

1st. We ask for the right to enlist in the regular army, irrespective of race or province of origin, but subject only to prescribed tests of physical fitness.

2nd. We ask that the commissioned ranks of the Indian Army should be thrown open to all classes of His Majesty's subjects, subject to fair, reasonable and adequate physical and educational tests. We ask that the military college or colleges should be established in India (*applause*) where proper military training can be received by those of our countrymen who will have the good fortune to receive His Majesty's Commission.

3rd. We ask that all classes of His Majesty's subjects should be allowed to join as volunteers, subject of course again to such rules and regulations as will ensure proper control and discipline, and

4th. We ask that the invidious distinctions under the Arms Act should be removed. (*Applause.*) This has no real connection with the three previous claims, but I deal with it together with the others as all these disabilities

are attempted to be justified on the same ground of political expediency.

Let us pause for a moment and consider the objections that are generally brought forward against the first three proposals.

As to the right to join the ranks, irrespective of race or Province of origin, objections are put forward, firstly, that not all the races of India provide good fighting material and that many of them lack the physical courage necessary for the army. And, secondly, that many of them are neither willing nor anxious to join the ranks or to enter the army in any capacity.

The last may be dealt with in a few words. We are asking for a right, and if it turns out that some of us and even all of us are not willing to avail ourselves of that right,—well, there will be no compulsion on them to do so, and nobody will be the worse off because of the right. On the contrary, it will remove a grievance bitterly felt and loudly complained of and will redound to the credit of Government.

As regards the first objection, *viz.*, the want of necessary martial spirit in certain classes or races, it requires more serious consideration. The argument is this: the country can afford to keep as a standing army only a certain number of trained soldiers and officers and it must get the best it can for the money it spends, and if certain races are unfit by reason of inherent want of courage for the profession of arms, the state would naturally select its soldiers from other classes. So say our opponents.

Taking it at its full strength, this argument has its limitation. For you cannot govern a State on exactly the same principles as you manage a shop. (*Applause and "hear, hear"*.) You may get better value for your money by getting as your soldier an Afridi or a Pathan or any non-British subject, but by excluding the Parsi, or the Madrassi or the Bengali, you create a feeling of grievance, if not of actual resentment, which is certain to cause serious embarrassment in the work of general administration.

You render it possible for the excluded classes to consider themselves as *equal* subjects and citizens responsible for the defence of the country, and you fail to foster that spirit of self-help and that sense of self-respect among those very classes which is essential to attain the goal of imperial unity.

Hitherto I have proceeded upon the assumption that some of the races in India are lacking in the physical courage necessary for the profession of arms. But, I ask, is it a correct hypothesis? (*No, no.*) Is it true that the Bengali—I am taking him as a type only—has not and will never have the requisite physical courage? (*No, no.*) The theory was started by Macaulay in his too sweeping condemnation of the people of the Gangetic delta, forgetting that the Bengal peasantry has always been a sturdy and virile class, particularly in tracts not touched by malaria. But take even the professional or educated classes in Bengal. A good many of them, who enlisted under conditions of great personal sacrifice, are at the present moment working in Mesopotamia as an Ambulance Corps (*applause and "hear, hear"*) and I am confident all British officers in that theatre of war from the General in Command downwards will tell you that not a single man in that Corps has proved himself deficient either in physical courage or in endurance.

Take another example nearer home. There is a body of public servants much misunderstood and therefore very often much maligned. I know there is a prejudice against them. I refer to the Bengali officers of the C.I.D. of the Police. Ask any Englishman in Bengal you like, from His Excellency the Governor downwards and I am sure he will tell you there is not one among those officers who does not unflinchingly face death daily and hourly for the sake of duty and loyalty (*applause*) and, let me add, that he does so, often inspite of much obloquy and great discouragement.

I take leave to point out, therefore, that it is not correct, at any rate at the present time, to assert of any

sections of the Indian people that they are wanting in such physical courage and manly virtues as to render them incapable of bearing arms. But even if it were so, is it not the obvious duty of England so to train them as to remove this incapacity (*applause*) as they are trying to remove so many others, especially if it be the case, as there is some reason to believe it is, that it is English rule which has brought them to such a pass? (*Hear, hear.*) England has ruled this country for considerably over 150 years now, and surely it cannot be a matter of pride to her that at the end of this period the withdrawal of her rule would mean chaos and anarchy aud would leave the country an easy prey to any foreign adventurers. There are some of our critics who never fail to remind us that if the English were to leave the country to-day, we would have to wire to them to come back before they got as far as Aden. (*Laughter.*) Some even enjoy the grim joke that were the English to withdraw now, there would be neither a rupee nor a virgin left in some parts of the country. For my part, I can conceive of no more scathing indictment of the results of British Rule. (*Applause.*) A superman might gloat over the spectacle of the conquest of might over justice, and over righteousness, but I am much mistaken if the British nation, fighting now as ever for the cause of justice and freedom and liberty, will consider it as other than discreditable to itself in the highest degree that, after nearly two centuries of British Rule, India has been brought to-day to the same emasculated condition (*applause*) as the Britons were in the beginning of the 5th century when the Roman legions left the English shores in order to defend their own country against the Huns, Goths and other barbarian hordes. (*Applause*).

In asking, therefore, for the right of military training we are only seeking to remedy the results I have described. We are seeking to regain our lost self-respect and to strengthen our sense of civic responsibility. We are seeking to regain the right to defend our homes and hearths against possible invaders,

should the strong protecting arm of England the ever withdrawn from our country. It is no mere sentiment that compels us to demand this inalienable right of all human beings, though sentiment has its undoubted place in the scheme of every government. Some day or other, our right arm may be called upon to defend all that man holds most precious. For who will venture to prophesy that sooner or later there may not be another such conflict as is now convulsing the world, when there may be new alliances and fresh combinations and when England may not have the same allies and advantages as she has now? (*Hear, hear.*)

I have endeavoured to prove that neither of the objections which are generally put forward against our claims to enlistment in the army is tenable. I have tried to show the justice as well as the necessity of our demands.

In the face of what has happened in the present war it is no longer correct to say what Lord Bryce said in 1912. This is what Lord Bryce said:

> To England, however, apart from the particular events which might have created the snapping of the tie and apart from the possible loss of a market, severance from India need involve no lasting injury. To be mistress of a vast country, whose resources for defence need to be supplemented by her own, adds indeed to her fame *but does not add to her strength.* (The italics are mine.) England was great and powerful before she owned a yard of land in Asia, and might be great and powerful again with no more foothold in the East than would be needed for the naval prestige which protects her commerce.

The resources for defence which India possesses even now do add to the strength of England as has been so amply proved in the present war. This strength could be multiplied a hundred-fold were our claims ever conceded. For, if the people of India are allowed and trained to bear arms, what nation is there on the face of the earth whose strength would compare with that of England? (*Applause.*) Nor is there any reason for apprehension that such concessions would be a source of internal danger. If the Sikh, the Gurkha,

the Mahratta and the Pathan—good and valiant soliders as they are—are found to be loyal and law-abiding, there is no reason to think that the case would be otherwise with the other races when admitted to the same status and privileges. (*Applause.*) Besides, we are only asking that the privileges are to be granted subject only to such conditions, rules, regulations and safeguards as to ensure proper discipline, and control.

In the case of Volunteers also, they will be similarly subject to all proper ssfeguards and restrictions which will be for the Government to lay down.

Subject to such safeguards, the ranks or volunteer corps will afford, without any risk whatever to the Government or the people, an outlet for restless energies which now find doubtful and dangerous channels.

In making these demands, I know I raise as large a question as the formation of a national militia. I desire frankly and freely to meet the criticism that such an army, with a preponderance of the Indian element, may be returned against the British Government. I venture to submit in reply that anarchists and seditionists may succeed in winning over an ignorant and mercenary army, but they will never succeed in winning over a truly national army (*applause*), drawn from a people made increasingly loyal by the spread of education and liberal self-governing institutions. (*Hear, hear.*) Of course, I am not suggesting that the army should be *nationalized* in a day any more than that the Government of the country should be nationalized by a stroke of the pen. But I urge in all humility that the time has come for making the beginning of a National Army in India. (*Hear, hear.*) The tremendous shock with which every part of our world-wide Empire has realised the prime necessity of maintaining an army large enough for its defence and protection renders it imperative that a strong National Army should be raised and maintained in every part of India.

The opening of a military career will fire the imagination and stimulate the virility of India in a way

that nothing else can do. And it is too much for India to expect to be treated in the same way as Russia treats her subject races—especially after the proof she has given of the prowess of her sons and their devotion and their loyalty to the imperial standard ?

Reason and convenience, justice and necessity, all support every one of the claims I have ventured to put forward ; and if a definite advance is not made in these respects, it will be difficult to believe that the War has changed the *angle of vision* of our rulers. (*Hear, hear.*) It will be impossible to retain faith in what was proclaimed by the present Premier, Mr. Asquith :

> That the Empire rests, not upon the predominance, artificial and superficial, of race or class, but upon the loyal affection of free communities built upon the basis of equal rights.

I now come to the last but not the least important of our claims in this respect, *viz.*, that the invidious distinctions under the Arms Act should be abolished. Sentiment as well as reason alike recommends it. Not only will the galling sense of racial inferiority and the overt imputation of universal disloyalty be removed by such a measure, but people will also get rid of onerous disabilities in the way of defending themselves against the attacks of wild animals as well as lawless human adversaries.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

Now we come to the subject which has given rise to a considerable discussion among us. If ever we attain our goal of self-government, it will not be merely through the expansion of Legislative Councils and their powers, nor yet through the admission of more Indians to Executive Councils or the establishment even of a national militia, though all of them have no doubt their proper use and importance in the scheme of our national progress. It will come in a very great measure with the advance and development of local self-government. When people generally so far understand their civic rights and duties as to be able to manage their own communal business, their

roads and drains, their tanks and wells, their schools and dispensaries, it will no longer be possible to keep them from controlling the higher work of administration. Indeed, it is not always possible to do the latter satisfactorily without having served a full term of apprenticeship in the former, and I cannot do better than remind you of what was said by Mrs. Besant in her address to the Congress last December, while supporting the resolution on Self-Government:

> The training for self-government is of vital import to the nation to-day. For the government of States is at once a science and an art: and in order that it may be worthily exercised the lesson must be learnt in local self-government, then in provincial autonomy, and finally in the self-government of the nation (*hear, hear*), for the work of governing is the most highly skilled profession upon earth. . . . . What then should you do? You should take part in local government wherever it is possible. As it is, take it and practise it, for you will gain experience and you will gain knowledge; and only that experience and knowledge will guide you when you come to speak in larger councils and to make your voice heard over vast areas. (*Applause.*) So I would plead to you to face this drudgery. It is drudgery, make no mistake; understand the details of local administration and understand how to manage your own drains, particularly your waterworks Those are the alphabets of self-government: and unless you go through that drudgery, no amount of enthusiasm and love for the country will make your administration a success.

No less emphatic was the advice of one of our most revered leaders of the Congress, Sir Subramania Iyer, as President of the Reception Committee of the last Congress. If this is the view of our leaders, the views of Government are no less clear. We need not go further back than the memorable Resolution of 1882 of Lord Ripon. You will remember what a generous scheme of local self-Government was there laid down "to foster sedulously the small beginnings of independent political life." It will take me long, and it will hardly be profitable, to trace the history of the failure, the dismal failure, of that scheme. But I may be pardoned for pointing out that the failure was due neither to the Government of India, nor to the local Government, nor yet to the civil service in India, as is sometimes hastily assumed, but, so far at any rate as

Bengal is concerned, to the whole framework of the scheme being changed by the Secretary of State for India in Council, inspite of the protests and objections of the authorities in this country.

Lord Ripon's Resolution laid down the following fundamental principles :

1. That the Local Governments should maintain throughout the country a network of Local Boards charged with definite duties and entrusted with definite funds.

2. That the jurisdiction of the Primary Boards should be so limited in area as to ensure both local knowledge and local interest on the part of each of the members.

3. That there should be a preponderance of non-official members to be chosen by election wherever possible.

4. That Government control on these bodies should be exercised from without rather than from within, non-official elected chairmen acting, wherever practicable, as chairmen of the Local Boards.

The Decentralisation Commission in their Report dealt with the matter at some length and also made some definite recommendations.

Lord Morley in his Reform Despatch, dated 27th November 1908, said :—

> The village in India has been the fundamental and indestructible unit of the social system surviving the downfall of dynasty after dynasty. I desire (said Lord Morley to the Viceroy) Your Excellency to consider the best way of carrying out a policy that would make the village a starting point of public life.

We have next the Resolution of Lord Hardinge's Government, dated 1st of May 1915, dealing with and assenting to many of the recommendations of the Decentralization Commission. We are, therefore, in agreement with Government as to the importance of local self-government. It is a matter of further general agreement that the re-development of the village as an administrative unit has been brought within the range of

practical politics by the spread of the co-operative movement. I find from the report of Sir E. Maclagan's Committee on Co-operation in India that primary societies have grown from 832 in 1906-07 to 14,566 in 1913-14, the number of members from 88,582 to 661,859, and the amount of working capital from *nil*, to 46,427,842 rupees. The report states :

> No one reading these figures can fail to be struck by the magnitude which the growth has already attained or to be convinced that the movement has taken firm root. Societies are now so spread over all parts of India and the advantages which their members are obtaining are so patent that it is impossible to doubt that the movement will eventually attain dimensions compared to which its present size will appear negligible. As a consequence, there will undoubtedly arise, through the medium of co-operation, a powerful organisation formed of those agricultural classes, who are at present inarticulate through want of education and cohesion.

Local self-government, supplemented by the spread of the co-operative movement, will gradually solve many of our most difficult problems—such as primary education, small industries, improved agriculture, indebtedness of the peasantry, rural sanitation and so forth, and to this we must devote our best energies and attention in the immediate future, bearing in mind that we have got to build from the village upwards.

Here is a vast field in which we can, in co-operation with the Government, work heart and soul for the amelioration of the condition of the masses of our people. It has been forcibly pointed out by that good friend of India, Sir Daniel Hamilton, that the development of the co-operative movement in the village requires thousands of men. The civilians who have been in charge of this movement have done wonders considering their numbers. They deserve the very highest praise, but their numbers are far too few. 12,000 village banks seem a large number to have been started in 10 years, but, at the same rate of progress, India will not have been covered with village banks for another 400 or 500 years, Is the great industry of India, agriculture, to wait all this time before it is provided with a banking system ? Are the 250 millions

of Indian cultivators to go on paying 30, 40 and 50 per cent. for their finance for hundreds of years to come, while the rest of the civilised world gets all the money it wants at 3, 4 and 5 per cent? What India wants is more men to develop co-operative credit and she must have them. The men are there, hundreds of them being turned out of her colleges every year with nothing to do, with nothing to look forward to. And every Indian will join in the expression of the hope that we shall soon see, established in every province of India, schools for the training in co-operative methods and co-operative finance of the best of India's young men, who will carry the co-operative flag into every village of India, and wage war on the darkness, and the ignorance and the poverty which exist to-day and which are in a large measure due to want of co-operation. In the same connection, my friend Sir Theodore Morison has gathered from official reports highly interesting illustrations which Co-operative Credit Societies are giving to the self-culture of the people. In one instance, a man of middle age learnt to read and write slowly to keep the accounts of the bank of which he was President, and, though his first efforts were painfully hard to decipher, he persevered to such good purpose that his books are now the best kept in the Punjab. In another village, the President and officers of the bank had acquired such influence that they had reconstituted the ancient authority of the village Panchayat for settling local disputes, with the result that litigation, which had been the curse of the place before, has now much decreased.

While I gratefully acknowledge the efforts now being made by the Government in all provinces for well and truly laying the foundations of local self-government, I cannot help regretting that the Resolution of the Government of India of last summer does not go far enough or even as far as Lord Ripon's Resolution of 1882 in the direction of recommending less official control and a greater extension of the elective principle, both as regards members and chairmen of District Boards. Let not our rulers forget that

self-government implies the right to go wrong, for it is nobler for a nation as for a man to struggle towards excellence with its own natural force and vitality, however blindly and vainly, than to live in irreproachable decency under expert guidance from without.

It is not possible for us any more now than it was for Lord Ripon in 1882 to lay down any hard and fast rules which shall be of universal application in a country so vast and in its local circumstances so varied as British India. All we can do is to ask that the principles laid down by Lord Ripon of undying memory should be generously given effect to, *viz.*, distinct funds with distinct duties, not too large administrative areas, more and more of elections (both of members and chairmen) and less and less of official control from within. From our side, schemes for different provinces have been put forward from 1870 downwards. I will mention only those of the late Mr. Malabari, Mr. R. C. Dutt and Mr. Gokhale. Schemes have also been prepared from the official side in almost all the different provinces—Bengal, Bombay, Madras, the United Provinces, the Punjab and the Central Provinces. It ought not, therefore, to be difficult in the existing state of the land to make an effective advance at once on an adjustment of these different schemes—and, if it is made in the right spirit, I feel confident that the ultimate success of local self-government in India is absolutely certain.

It is for us to co-operate whole-heartedly with the officials for the success of the different measures of local self-government which are already being undertaken in the different provinces. Let us not assume, as we are sometimes unfortunately inclined to do, that the Civilians will be loath to part with the powers which they have hitherto possessed. Let us in justice to the Indian Civil Service remember that the members of that distinguished body have never spared themselves in the service of India. Let me also implore my friends of the Indian Civil Service not to commit the mistake of looking upon the educated Indian as out of touch with his less favoured countrymen or trying to keep the latter down for his own personal profit and advancement. Let us look upon each other as willing and necessary co-adjutors for the advancement of

India in every department. Let us not rail at the mote in our brother's eye without considering the beam that is in our own. Let neither of us indulge in prejudice or fretfulness, but work in friendly co-operation for the progress and prosperity of the teeming millions of India.

DEVELOPMENT OF OUR COMMERCE, INDUSTRIES AND AGRICULTURE

Whatever difference of opinion may exist as to whether India is growing richer or poorer under British Rule, there is none with regard to her extreme poverty. And there can never be political contentment without material prosperity shared by all classes of the people. And what the District Administration Committee of Bengal quotes with approval, as regards Bengal, namely, that our industrial backwardness is a great political danger, applies in fact and in reality to the whole of India.

No one will be disposed to question the fact of this amazing backwardness. Rich in all the resources of nature, India continues to be the poorest country in the civilised world. The result is that an unhealthy political activity has arisen among certain classes of the people. As the District Administration Committee of Bengal says:

> This unrest compels Government to take repressive measures —a regrettable necessity which makes all the more desirable the adoption of those remedial and beneficent measures which will afford the most certain cure of the worst evils of the situation while proving that Government is no less determined to create prosperity than to maintain order.

What are these "remedial measures"? Technical schools and even technological institutes are not enough. These have in all modern States generally followed and not preceded the development of industries and manufactures. The first step taken by Japan was to start factories, either financed by Government or with Government control and managed by experts from abroad. In India alone, with the exception of spasmodic efforts, the Government adheres to the exploded *laissez faire* doctrine that the development of commerce and industry is not within the province of the State.

It is high time that this policy were abandoned. The necessity of carrying on demonstration work in agriculture, the greatest industry of the country, on a commercial scale, is admitted by all, and it is only where this principle has been put into practice that agricultural improvements have been taken up by the people. Similar results will follow if the same policy is pursued with regard to other industries and manufactures. They have followed whenever such experiments have been undertaken by the Government, as in the case of aluminium and chrome-tanning in Madras.

The time is singularly opportune. The war has put an end to the imports of German and Austrian goods and Japan is already making great efforts to capture the trade which by right ought to be ours.

I have neither the knowledge nor the capacity to go into details, and I rejoice that the experts at the Congress of Indian Commerce were able to point out specific ways and means by which the Government can assist us in this respect. But I will venture to say that the solution of the problem can no longer be safely postponed. And it will test, as no other question has done, the altruism of English statesmanship, for in promoting and protecting Indian industries it may become necessary—it *will* become necesssary—to sacrifice the interests even of English manufacturers. (*Applause and "hear, hear."*)

A PROGRAMME OF SELF-HELP

Brother-delegates, hitherto I have been dealing with measures that can be undertaken only by the Government and in doing so I have incidentally mentioned the various ways in which we ourselves must act and move forward. Indeed, the field for such work is so vast as to render it impossible of definition. Primary education, improvement of agriculture and industrial expansion, improvement of rural as well as urban sanitation—there is work enough and to spare for every one of us. And how much could we not do by our own efforts, if only we cared to organise ourselves. I venture to suggest that we, in this connection, should

lay down a constructive and continuous programme of work in all these directions as a part of our Congress activities, and that Provincial and District Committees all over the country should occupy themselves throughout the year in some one or more of these manifold directions, so as to show the achievement of some result, however small, however insignificant, at the end of each year. For instance, while waiting for the establishment of a system of free and compulsory primary education, let each District branch of the Provincial Congress Committees be able to show that it has either directly or indirectly contributed to the establishment of ten, or even five, or even two primary schools in that district during one year. (*Applause.*) Similarly, we might very usefully and profitably extend our activity in supplementing the work of the District Local Boards and in spreading among our rural population some elementary knowledge of hygiene and sanitation and in organising relief for local and provincial distress, if and when need be.

For this kind of self-help, the first requisite is to raise funds for the propaganda. Are we willing to do so? I confess to a feeling of diffidence, for though friends and leaders like Allan Octavian Hume *(applause)* have repeatedly asked us to make permanent provision for the work of the Congress, both here and in England, their advice seems to have fallen on absolutely deaf ears. Sir S. Iyer suggested last year that a body of Congress supporters should be brought into existence, each member thereof paying a subscription, say, of Rs. 25 per annum. He very modestly presumed that it would not be difficult to find in each province a few hundreds of such subscribers, and he suggested that the funds so raised should be held and administered by a few trustees duly appointed, who should further be clothed with a corporate character by registration under the law so as to make them really competent to receive and hold, for the Congress, donations and endowments, which he hoped would not be long in coming. That

is still to come. Let us, at this Congress, wipe out the reproach that moderate Indian opinion only devotes a few days to public business in order to have the right during the rest of the year not to think any more about it. (*Hear, hear.*) Let us engrave in our hearts the advice which Mr. Hume gave us in 1904 when he said :

> As for yourselves, stop foolish quarrels and depressing rivalries, substitute close and loyal co-operation and reasoned and constant action, give freely your time, your money and your hearts : speak little and do much. (*Applause*)

Let us begin to deal with the concrete problems of civic life on the basis of ascertained and accepted facts, and in order that our beloved institution, the Congress, may be a living actuality, let us begin by collecting first the funds which are indispensable for the carrying on of its work. It is my hope that this Congress may be a fertilising stream of steady effort fed by the spirit of service and sacrifice and spreading far and wide the blessings of peace and prosperity. If in speaking to you to-day—and I have spoken freely and frankly—I have succeeded in the smallest possible measure in advancing the object of the Indian National Congress and in appealing successfully, in however small a degree, to the better mind both of England and India, I shall consider my humble labours to have been more than amply recompensed.

OUR FUTURE

And now, brother-delegates, I have placed before you, to the best of my light, what the Government should do for ourselves, so that we may have an India of the future answering our ideal, satisfying our aspirations, and rising to the height of our noblest emotions.

And towards this end the War is rapidly helping us onward. In the midst of the carnage and massacre, there is being accomplished the destruction of much that is evil and there is the budding forth of much that will abide. False pride and aloofness are giving place to union and genuine co-operation between those whom nothing before

seemed able to draw together. Protestant and Catholic, Churchman and Dissenter, Hindu and Moslem (*applause*), Englishman and Indian, colonial and coloured peoples are offering their daily worship not in separate sanctuaries but under the improvised shelter of the trench or the barn, animated by the same faith and trusting in the same inspiration. (*Applause*) A new spirit of self-sacrifice, a new interest in the weak and suffering is abroad; self-indulgence is giving place to self-sacrifice, and throughout the British Empire there is prevailing an atmosphere of good will and mutual service and esteem. It seems to me that, under the benign dispensation of an inscrutable Providence, we shall emerge into a new era of peace and goodwill, and our beloved Motherland will occupy an honoured place in the Empire with which her fortunes are indissolubly linked, and we shall be the free and equal citizens of that great Empire (*applause*), bearing its burdens, sharing its responsibilities and participating in its heritage of freedom and glory as comrades and brethren. (*Loud applause.*)

Thirty-first Congress—Lucknow—1916

HON. BABU AMVICA CHARAN MAZUMDAR

PREFATORY

BROTHER and Sister-Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,—It was Lord Curzon who on a memorable occasion said that it was not given to "an Indian corporal to carry the Field-Marshal's baton in his knapsack," but here an Indian private, recruited somewhere in the seventies who, after a few years' training, joined his colours but never rose above the rank of a subaltern, has to-day after nearly 35 years of active service found that baton thrust into his hand which, however, he neither deserved nor dreamt of in all his life. I use no language of mere convention when I say, that trying and momentous as the present situation is, I sincerely wished that at this turning point in the history of the national movement, the presidential chair of the Thirty-first Indian National Congress had been offered to a more capable person who might have not only inspired greater confidence, but by his superior tact and judgment safely steered it clear of all shoals and bars that still lie before it and successfully led it into port after a perilous voyage extending over thirty years: I wished it had been permitted to me to stand aside and gratify the wishes of a section of my countrymen with whose ardent hopes and sanguine expectations for the rapid advancement of the country I am in the fullest sympathy. But it ought to be remembered that the chosen spokesman of a great representative assembly like the Congress is merely an accredited agent whose individuality

is more or less merged in the body politic and whose freedom of action is largely controlled by that body. Even his voice, as I understand it, is bound not to reflect his personal *ipse dixits*, but echo the reasoned feelings and sentiments of those whom he seeks to represent. In every organised movement the individual counts for nothing and the voice of the majority cannot but be respected under a constitutional fiction as the voice of the whole. In a case like the present, one is often precluded even from giving due consideration to his fitness or unfitness for the great task which is thrust upon him. It was the country's mandate in the country's cause which demanded unquestioning submission. The decision as well as the responsibility rested with the country, the duty resting on me. I am neither so vain, nor so foolish as to imagine for a moment, that the great honour bestowed upon me is intended for a personal distinction. I am under no such delusion. I am fully conscious that it is the democratic spirit of this National organisation which has, in its natural evolution, sought to vindicate itself by drawing out an old servant of the cause from his retirement in an obscure corner of the country to fill the presidential chair in the dim twilight of the evening of his life. Gentlemen, if I have not begun by offering you the customary thanks, it is because thanks pre-suppose some claim to receive a gift, and I frankly confess that I have not sufficient confidence in myself to thank you for the very difficult and delicate position in which you have placed me. However, lest you or anybody else should think that I am " poor even in thanks " I thank you with all the warmth and fervour of a devoted heart for the great honour—the greatest in the gift of the country — which you have conferred on me by calling me to preside our the deliberations of the Thirty-first Indian National Congress at Lucknow, the historic capital of Oudh which played such an important part in the early history of British rule in India—Lucknow, the *Koshala* of the ancients, the city built by Asoof-ud-Dowlah, and adorned by his successors with magnificent mosques, mausoleums and the imambaras and crowned with gilded towers, minarets and

cupolas—Lucknow, the centre of the great tornado which swept over India in 1857 in which the brave Lawrence and Nicholson fell and where the gallant Havelock sleeps embalmed in the thrilling memories of a historic siege. Gentlemen, I think I have one indisputable claim to your just and generous consideration: if you have in your choice placed me in this responsible position, you are in common fairness bound to extend to me a reasonable amount of support and indulgence so as to enable me to discharge my duties with some measure of success.

TRIBUTE TO THE DEAD

Ladies and Gentlemen, while most people count their gains, we have to count our losses at the end of every year. How sad it is to contemplate that scarcely a year passes away without leaving us the poorer in the ranks of our public men! How fast are the dear old familiar faces on this Congress platform vanishing into the void! Not to speak of the serious losses which the country sustained in her earlier bereavements, only last year we lost three of our tried veterans, the brilliant, the versatile, the indomitable Pherozeshah Mancharjee Mehta, the saintly and devoted Gopal Krishna Gokhale and that silent and steadfast worker who was one of the brave 72 who inaugurated the Congress at Bombay in 1885—Ganga Prasad Varma. And before this old, rickety globe of ours complete another revoluion, that "fell sergeant strict in his arrest" has snatched away three of our brave comrades whose loyalty to the country was equalled only by their spirit of self-sacrifice, and whose devotion to duty was surpassed only by their extraordinary capacity for work. G. Subramania Iyer, the founder of the *Hindu*, the organiser of the *Mahajana Sabha*, the editor of the *Swadeshamitran*, who was the first to lead the plough and turn the first sod on the Congress soil by moving the first resolution of the First Indian National Congress, may well be called the maker of Modern Madras; while Daji Abaji Khare, who was for about eight years loyally and devotedly associated with our esteemed friend and veteran leader, the Hon'ble Mr. D. E. Wacha, as a Joint General Secretary to the Congress, was a man of

whom any community might be justly proud and whose untimely death is an irreparable loss to the country and the Congress. Lastly, it is with feelings of profound grief which has not yet been touched by the healing hand of Time that I must mention the passing of our gifted and distinguished countryman, one of my predecessors in the chair to which you have called me to-day, Pandit Bishan Narain Dhar. Brother-delegates, as the first citizen of Lucknow and the Chairman of the Reception Committee, his voice should have been the first to be heard in this *pandal* this afternoon in eloquent welcome extended to us all, but it was not to be, and his voice has been hushed in the great Silence, and the duty remains with us of offering our respectful tribute to his departed worth. Yet another eminent Indian has recently passed away, who, though not *in* the Congress was *with* the Congress all his life. Mr. B. L. Gupta belonged to that distinguished triumvirate who formed the vanguard of the Indian Civil Service in this country and it was he who was the originator, if not the author, of the Ilbert Bill. Two of this triumvirate have passed away, while, thank God, the third who having consecrated his life to the service of the Motherland, still retains the command which he has held for the last 30 years. May Surendranath Banerjee be long spared to lead us and serve the country. We have had very few friends in England and how fast is their rank thinning away! Sir Henry Cotton who, both in and out of Parliament, was one of the bravest and truest champions of the Indian people and who had cheerfully sacrificed his own interests for those of India, passed away last year amidst the universal lamentations of a grateful people who had most need of such a man at the present juncture; while shortly afterwards the great Labour Leader, Mr. Keir Hardie, who made India's cause his own and like Hampden with dauntless breast fought for suffering humanity, went to his eternal rest, creating a void in the ranks of our friends which is not likely to be soon filled up. We are, however, grateful to kind Providence that the Saint of Versova and the Sage of Meridith are still spared to us to guide us and cheer us with occasional messages of hope and

confidence. How the brave and the mighty have fallen and how many more have yet to fall in the weary march through the desert before we can reach even the threshold of the Promised Land. But dead or alive, they cannot be completely lost to us if we can only realise that their mighty spirits are ever hovering over us and in their unerring vision silently guiding us in the onward march, encouraging us in our success and comforting us in the hours of our despair and despondency.

RE-UNITED CONGRESS

Gentlemen, even the darkest cloud is said to have its silver lining, and in this vale of sorrow, there is hardly any misfortune which has not both a positive and negative side. If the United Congress was buried in the *debris* of the old French Garden at Surat, it is re-born to-day in the Kaiser Bagh of Lucknow, the garden of the gorgeous King Wajed Ali Shah. After nearly ten years of painful separation and wanderings through the widerness of misunderstandings and the mazes of unpleasant controversies, each widening the breach and lengthening the chain of separation, both the wings of the Indian Nationalist party have come to realise the fact that united they stand, but divided they fall, and brothers have at last met brothers and embraced each other with the gush and ardour, peculiar to a reconciliation after a long separation. Blessed are the peace-makers. Honour, all honour to those who in this suicidal civil war held the olive branch of peace, and glory to the patriotic good sense of the belligerents on both sides who, having realised their true position and responsibility, have, at a psychological moment, so wisely buried their hatchets and closed their ranks. There are occasional differences even in the best regulated families and how much wider must be the scope of differences in the vast political field of a country like ours where the people have so little of the power of initiation in their hands and where the causes of misunderstanding and consequent vexation and disappointment are so numerous and so irritating. Nothing succeeds like success and nothing so much disturbs the equanimity of the public mind and embitters public feeling

as failure and in a common cause the failure of one method easily gives a handle to exaggerate the importance of an opposite view, though, if the position were reversed, the result might have been still worse. But if there be honesty of motive nnd singleness of purpose, tho widest divergence of opinion need neither frighten nor irritate any reasonable mind. Action and reaction is the law of nature's evolution. Struggle represents animation as stillness indicates stagnation, and thus even the muddy water of a rushing stream is ever more wholesome than the transparent water of a stagnant pool. In politics healthy opposition indicates the vitality of national life and the disturbances and disruptions that occasionaly take place in the life of a nation serve only to clear and purify the atmosphere it breathes and rarify the ether it inhales. In the British constitution there are the contending forces which at times seem so menacing but serve in reality only to cement and strengthen it. The real strength of a nation does not lie in mere smooth work, but in solidarity and compactness when the national interests demand them, and in sinking all personal differences as soon as the trumpet-call of duty is sounded to rally round a common cause. It would be most foolish to persist in prejudices in the name of principles and to lose sight of the real issue involved in a case. Nothing is more common in a game than for the players to quarrel over a false move and to take no notice of an impending checkmate. I do not endorse the opinion that a subject race has no politics, but I do maintain that the principles of a subject people must be somewhat elastic to suit the exigencies of their situation, and when a common cause demands unity of action a practical people cannot afford to quarrel over means but must be prepared to make sacrifices on both sides for the common end which must be placed above every other consideration. In the sphere of organised activities for the benefit of a corporate body, there is nothing more disastrous than want of mutual respect, trust and confidence among its members. Where the end is the same the diverse means and methods to attain that end should not betray either parties or individuals into a course of action which defeats that end. A principle

divorced from practice is apt to degenerate into a morbid sentiment and for all practical purposes even the noblest of sentiments must at times bend itself to the stern necessities of circumstances and be regulated by a spirit of mutual confidence, toleration, forbearance and even sacrifice. The misfortune is that in the heat of a controversy we often lose sight of the end, and, missing the real issue, substitute the means for the end. A shade of difference in opinion, viewed in an atmosphere of prejudice and passion, is often magnified into a wide divergence of principle, and the most trusted of comrades easily find themselves ranged on opposite sides; while misunderstanding widens the breach, recriminations embitter the mind and misrepresentations serve to fan the fire into a flame. It was thus that we separated in 1907 and having grown wiser by our experience, we have, I presume, learnt to know each other better. Let us now no longer disparage the old nor despite the young. If youthful zeal and enthusiasm are invaluable assets, the judgement and experience as also the caution and sobriety of the old are no less useful and indispensable. It is no doubt the brave soldier that fights and wins the battle, but even a *Narayani Sena* of old, the invincibles in the *Mahabharata*, would be scattered to the winds without a veteran general to command them from behind. Remember it is the "Old Congressmen" who have built this organisation, given a shape and form to it, worked out its details and inspired the people with the very ideal which is swaying their minds and surging in their thoughts from one end of the country to the other. Believing, as I do, in the evolution of a national life in perpetual succession, I have no difficulty in admitting that there is a limit also to caution, wisdom and sobriety beyond which they cannot be exercised without their forfeiting the characteristics of these virtues and without their degenerating into pusillanimity and moral turpitude. There is as much danger in rashness as in imbecility and the one may serve as a cloak for inaction as the other may contribute to wreck the most useful institutions. It should be fairly acknowledged that if the "Old Congressmen" have so far failed to run faster than

they have done, they have at least done one thing, in that they have walked steadily and never stumbled. Men run before they learn to walk and if walking is a slower process running is not certainly a surer method to avoid a fall. It is surely not wisdom to call our elders fools, for there are those coming after us who, following our precedent, may return the compliment with accumulated interest. Let us, therefore, give up all cants and like practical men firmly and resolutely, yet soberly and discreetly look the situation in the face, and with heart within and God overhead loyally follow the leaders who, if they have not won the battle, yet have neither fallen back nor betrayed their trust. I most cordially welcome Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Mr. Motilal Ghose and other brave comrades who separated from us at Surat and have been happily restored to us at Lucknow. I rejoice to find that they are after all "of us" and "with us" and let us hope never to part again.

PRESIDENTIAL PRONOUNCEMENT

Gentlemen, you naturally expect every year your President to make a clear and emphatic pronouncement, but you cannot expect your presidents—no, not even the tallest among them—to work miracles for you in a three days' session. The *ideal* of the Congress has long been well defined and no new ideas are needed either to amplify or illustrate it nor are fresh ideas as abundant as blackberries so that whoever passes by may pick up any number of them. The country has a number of grievances and the Congress had made certain demands to remove them. It has also decided that it shall use none but constitutional methods for the fulfilment of its demands. Your presidents can only perform the function of the air-man by taking a survey of the hostile positions, making the points of relative strength and weakness and signalling the lines of attack; but, after all, you are the gunners who have to fix your batteries, take your aim and actively work at the machines. Your president's pronouncement even at its best can only be a faithful echo of the prevailing sentiments of the country. Lord Morley complained that he could not give us the moon, but we were never so moon-struck as to ask for

the moon and his Lordship need have no fears that he has given us something more substantial than mere moon-shine. Gentlemen, it will be my most earnest endeavour to throw some little light on some of the phases of the present situation, and if I cannot present to you even the faint light of the *Aurora borealis*, I shall certainly not presume to allure you by raising to your minds' eye the treacherously dancing flashes of the *Will-o'-the-wisp*. Gentlemen, if you have this time gone a little out of your way in choosing your president, that president may be permitted to go a little out of the way of all past precedents in addressing you on the present occasion. I propose to confine myself mainly to one question which is the all absorbing topic of the day —the question of Self-Government for India. It is an all-embracing problem to the solution of which all other subsidiary questions are mere corollaries. If this one problem could be solved, the other problems would solve themselves. But before we proceed to discuss this question, we must have a clear idea of the form of Government under which we are placed, the defects of that form of Government, the disabilities which we suffer therefrom, the system of Government that we want as a substitute for it and our capacity to receive such a substitute.

THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT WE LIVE IN: DESPOTISM

It is now a matter of history that when a company of merchants introduced British rule in India in the middle of the 18th century, it was an absolutely despotic form of Government that was established in the country. Having regard to the unsettled state of the country and the internal dissensions and disputes not only among the different communities, but also among the people of the same community, any other form of Government would perhaps have been impossible at that time. A despotic form of Government is not necessarily synonymous with a bad government, but a beneficent despotism is of the exception and not of the rule. It is not every age or every country that can produce a Rama or a Harun-ul-Rashid, a Charlemagne or an Akbar. The Government of the East India Company over which the British Parliament exercised little

or no control, and the so-called Board of Control, very little supervision except for their own interest, was marked by nepotism and at its later stage by corruption. In spite of repeated warnings of Parliament, education was neglected, justice was perfunctorily administered and the strong were permitted with impunity to oppress the weak. The Company which had developed small factories into vast territories naturally regarded their unprecedented acquisition as a commercial enterprise and considered the sovereign administration of the country as of lesser importance than the development of their trade and the increase of their profits. They viewed their own interest more than the interest of the people. It is a wonder that such a system of Government could have lasted so long and surely it lasted long enough to meet with a violent end.

BENEVOLENT DESPOTISM

After a hundred years of misrule it was at last overthrown by a military rising which transferred the Government of the country from the Company to the Crown. From this time a system of Government was established in the country which gave altogether a new complexion to the administration. This Government was designated a " benevolent despotism "—an expression which though not exactly a contradiction in terms, was sufficient to indicate that the form of Government was still essentially a despotism, though tempered by generous and benevolent considerations. It was this Government which actuated by its benevolent intentions introduced, by slow degrees, various reforms and changes which gradually broadened and liberalised the administration and widened the views and deepened the loyalty of the people. It fostered liberal education, established justice, created public confidence in the integrity of the administration and restored peace and order throughout the country. In its gradual development it introduced, though in a limited form, Self-Government in the local concerns of the people, admitted the children of the soil to a limited extent into the

administration of the country and reformed the Councils by introducing an appreciable element of representation in them. It has annihilated time and space by the construction of railways and the establishment of telegrapic communication throughout the country. It has established a form of administration which in its integrity and purity can well vie with any other civilised country in the world, while the security of life and property which it conferred was until recently a boon of which any people may justly be proud. All this a " benevolent despotism " has accomplished.

BUREAUCRACY

But here it stopped and after having exhausted all the resources which a personal benevolence could supply, it has slowly and imperceptibly yielded to the infirmities of its nature, and by a process of natural evolution has resolved itself into a system of barren and sterilizing bureaucracy. Despotism has done in this country what despotism has done elsewhere, and if it has failed to do more, it is because its nature could not have permitted it to do more. In the exercise of its beneficent influence it reached a stage and attained a height beyond which it was not possible for despotism to ascend. The bureaucracy which now rules the country is despotism condensed and crystallised. In it the Service is so firmly and indissolubly combined with the State that for all practical purposes the one may be said to be completely merged in the other—a combination which is infinitely more dangerous than the combination of the Judicial and the Executive functions of which we have heard so much. It is certainly not accountable to the people and the Service and the State being one and the same it is responsible only to itself. It is essentially conservative in its temperament and thoroughly unprogressive in its character. Its efficiency is indisputable, its honesty and integrity beyond all question ; but it is bound hand and foot to form a precedent lacking in life and soul. It can contract, but it cannot expand. It holds all the

threads of the administration within the hollow of its palm and can ill afford either to release or to relax any one of them. It is extremely jealous of its powers and intolerant of criticism. It sincerely wishes to see the people happy and contented, only it cannot allow them to grow. It has its idea of beauty and its Chinese shoe to give effect to it, however painful to its subject the operation may be. Like Narcissus of old it is so much entranced with the loveliness of its own shadow that it has neither the leisure nor the inclination to contemplate beauty in others.

THE NEW SPIRIT

But the people have completely outgrown this system and a new spirit has arisen in the country. Call it visionary, call it impatient idealism, call it intoxication if you choose, that spirit is the manifestation of a democratic force which is transforming the destinies of an old world to a new order of things. Under the pressure of this irresistible force, time-honoured kingdoms and constitutions are crumbling to pieces and giving place to new ones, and hereditary monarchs of ancient and even celestial origin are quietly taking their exit, as on a stage, without shedding a tear or a drop of blood. Portugal, Turkey, Persia and China all have felt the breath of this force. It is agitating Egypt and is pulsating the life of India. In India it has fortunately been of normal growth. This new spirit may be impulsive, but it is perfectly genuine and intensely patriotic. If sympathetically treated it may be directed in a proper channel, but it would be unwise either to ignore or try to repress it. Old ideas are changing faster than one can realise, and it is no fault of the Indian people if they are unable to reconcile themselves to a patriarchal or a paternal form of Government. The present form of Government, whatever its claims for the maintenance of an orderly administration may be, is more or less an anachronism. Sir Henry Cotton, who recalls with just pride that for three generations his family has been associated with the bureaucratic service in India, said that "the Indian Civil Service, as at present constituted, is doomed." While still in service he formulated a scheme

of reconstruction which the Indian Public Service Commission of 1887 considered as "visionary." Now that another Royal Commission has been appointed to enquire into the Indian Public Services, Sir Henry Cotton has again returned to the charge. Writing in the *Contemporary Review* and commenting on the terms of reference to the Commission, which apparently assume the existing constitution as the permanent basis of Indian administration, Sir Henry Cotton says :—

> But what is wanted now is no scheme for bolstering up the decaying fabric of a service adapted only to obsolete conditions which have passed away and never can return.

In a despotic form of Government everything is done *for* the people and nothing *by* the people. Its greatest drawback is that it makes the people whom it governs impotent to help themselves. It may make a people perfectly happy but it cannot make them resourceful nor even contented, self-reliant and manly in their life and conduct. Such a people must always be a burden to the State, and the "white man's burden" of which we hear so much is the creation of this despotic form of Government, and those who complain of India being a "*nuisance for the Empire*" ought to remember that it is the accumulated errors of this form of Government during the last hundred and fifty years and more. Even in a benevolent despotism there is but one patriot and that patriot is either the despot or the close bureaucracy in which the Government is vested. As in a patriarchal family, the subjects of a despotic Government are of a stunted growth and are all more or less like spoiled children incapable of either helping themselves or helping the *Pater familia*.

BUREAUCRACY NEARING ITS END

But to its credit it must be recorded that this benevolent despotism has done one thing—it has prepared its own coffin and has written on it its own epitaph with its own hand. Despotism was wholly repugnant to the British instinct and entirely foreign to the British Constitution, and what it did, therefore, was to prepare a curious admixture

of two incongruous substances, a bureaucratic constitution leavened with democratic ideas, which can never coalesce but can serve only to neutralize each other. Paradoxical as it may seem and strange as it may sound, this despotism has throughout consciously or unconsciously and perhaps in fits of absent-mindedness, worked up to its own subversion, and like the fabulous Phœnix, in anticipation of its allotted cycle of years, prepared its own nest of spices, set fire to it and flapped that fire into a flame with its own wings singing its melodious song to consume itself into ashes out of which to rise again in a glorious re-birth. From the Queen's Proclamation of 1858 down to Lord Morley's Reform of 1909, the British Parliament has not taken a single step which was not calculated finally to overthrow this despotic form of Government. The education given to the people, the system of local self-government introduced into the country and the elective principle recognised in the higher Councils of the Empire have all tended to undermine the old system of Government which it would be a vain attempt now either to rebuild or to repair.

A CHAPTER OF MISTAKES

The bureaucracy have, however, discovered the mistakes of their predecessors. But it is not as easy to rectify as to discover mistakes. We too may have discovered many a mistake of our grand-fathers. But what avails it to cry over spilt milk? It is more than vaguely suggested that it was a mistake to have opened the eyes of the Indian people. I fully admit that from the point of view of these critics it was a great mistake—the greatest indeed ever committed by a despotic Government, benevolent or otherwise. It was a great mistake to have issued the Education Despatch of 1854, and it was a great blunder to have confirmed that mistake by the establishment of Universities at Calcutta in 1857, at Bombay and Madras in 1858, at Lahore in 1882 and at Allahabad in 1887. It was a mistake to have granted liberty to the press and freedom of speech throughout the country: it was a mistake to have introduced local

Self-Government in 1884, and it was a greater mistake to have reformed the Councils in 1903 and again in 1910. It is a chapter, nay a whole volume, of mistakes which have been committed by successive parliaments and administrations which, I am afraid, it is too late either to amend or to rectify. It is the instinct of the British people and the spirit of the British constitution which led the British Parliament to this long series of mistakes. But there has always been a counteracting force in India, and for aught we know, but for these mistakes both India and England might have met with greater difficulties. In recent years there has always been a tendency to cry "halt" and every step forced upon the bureaucracy in the forward march by the irresistible current of events has been followed by a paroxysm of regret, and all that the Government has been able to do to retain its ancient character and at the same time to keep pace with the pressing demands of the ceaseless march of time has invariably presented the appearance of texture of the faithful Penelope unravelling by night what is woven by day. Vain attempts are these: The tide has set in and it will not roll back under any human command. You may, and have to adjust and re-adjust your wind-mill occasionally, but you cannot turn back the course of the river. The best and only remedy therefore now is not to go back but to press forward, not to cling to an obsolete and worn out institution which is no longer suited to the present condition of the country, but firmly and cautiously adapt the constitution to the requirements of the time and adjust it to the growing demands of the people. Every declaration made by the Government, every report of commissions and committees having a bearing upon the present unrest and every legislative measure passed to cope with the disturbed state of the country bear testimony to the fact that there is a struggle going on between a benevolent despotism and an overgrown people who, with all their defects and short-comings, are no longer satisfied with the present system. On the one hand there is manifested in almost every direction a marked tendency in the people to break through the leading strings by which

they have been held so long and assert their constitutional rights and privileges as citizens of the British Empire, and on the other hand, there is an equally persistent attempt on the part of the bureaucracy to maintain its prestige and authority.

A CONFLICT

It is a case of clear conflict between the forces of an old constitution and the new spirit, and as the inevitable result of such a conflict, a state of things has arisen for which neither may be wholly responsible, but from which both have equally to suffer, although the presumption in such a case is always in favour of the people according to all political philosophers.

"I am not one of those," says Burke, "who think that the people are never wrong. They have been so, frequently and outrageously, both in other countries and in this. But I do say that in all disputes between them and their rulers, the presumption is at least upon a par in favour of the people."

In quoting this dictum of Burke with approbation, Lord Morley, who has recently dealt more with India than any other living British statesman, adds :

Nay, experience perhaps justifies him in going further. When popular discontents are prevalent, something has generally been found amiss in the constitution or the administration.

And truly does Burke observe :

The people have no interest in disorder. When they go wrong it is their error and not their crime.

Then the great political philosopher continues in the words of Sully in which his biographer passionately enjoins that

both practical politicians and political students should bind about their necks, and write upon the tables of their hearts —the revolutions that come to pass in great states are not the result of chance, nor of popular caprice. . . As for the populace it is never from a passion that it rebels, but from impatience of sufferings.

It is in the nature of a bureaucratic administration to have absolute confidence in its own judgment and little respect for the opinions of others. The British Government, as established in India at the present day, has no

doubt long ceased to be an absolute despotism nor can it be described as a popular Government. A cursory examination of its policies and its practices will disclose the nature of this conflict and the stage at which it has arrived due as much to the process of natural evolution as to the legitimate sequence of events to which that policy has so largely contributed. Gentlemen, be it understood that we are here to criticise Government and not to sing its praises. If, therefore, we have more to refer to its defects and short-comings it is not to be presumed that we are wholly insensible to its many good points or are unable to appreciate them. Not do I feel pressed to enter upon any vindication of our loyalty to the Throne as it is above all cavil or criticism.

EDUCATION

To take up the question of education first, as it is the foremost problem in the evolution of a nation. Ever since the Crown took up the reins of government, it was actuated by a broad and liberal policy of educating the people and elevating them in the scale of nations. Worried and wearied with the evasive policy of the East India Company, the Board of Control under the guidance of a far-sighted statesman, Sir Charles Wood, afterwards Lord Halifax, issued the memorable Despatch of 1854 which is now known as the great Charter of Education in India. In pursuance of this Despatch, a University was established in 1857 in the then Capital of the Empire.

But the Mutiny having broken out almost simultaneously, a pretext was easily found to propose a change of policy. Sir Frederick Halliday, the first Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, came to the rescue and in a letter to Lord Ellenborough, who was then the President of the Board of Control, neatly disposed of the objections raised. Sir Frederick wrote:

> On the question of the connection between education and the rebellion, our wisdom, no less than our duty, is to persevere in what we have begun and not to turn our backs upon Behar or any other parts of our territory, because there is difficulty or danger in the path of improvement. It is certain, however, that both the

difficulty and the danger are exaggerated and look imposing only to those who keep at a distance from them and view them through the delusive mist of prejudice and misinformation. As to difficulty, the progress of Bengal, within the memory of living witnesses, is a proof of the aptitude of the people and of their plastic docility. And though it is not uncommon in these days to attribute the recent mutinies to our educational operations, and even to propose to draw back from them for fear of similar consequences in future, the error of this opinion is like that of a man who after unwisely and incautiously exposing a barrel of gunpowder to all kinds of dangerous influences and having by good luck, and in spite of bad management, long escaped without an accident, should at last when the fatal and inevitable explosion takes place, blame neither the gunpowder nor his own rashness and indiscretion, but rather lay the whole mischief to account of some one of the many little sparks flying about, and talk of limiting the use of fire and candle in future to prevent similar occurrences.

No more statesmanlike view of the situation, or a more crushing reply, could have been advanced, and the Government of Lord Canning made a firm stand against the hysteric cry of an alarmist crowd. I have purposely quoted this long extract, for it will be seen that the same cry has again been raised in recent years and has contributed not a little to the shaping of the present educational policy of the Government, with this difference that there is neither a Halliday nor a Canning to take a dispassionate perspective of the situation and boldly adhere to the noble policy of 1854. In 1858, two more Universities were established in Bombay and Madras, and in the following years another Despatch was issued under the authority of the Crown re-affirming the great Despatch of 1854 and laying down in clear and emphatic terms that greater impetus should be given to education in the future than had been done in the past, that more colleges and schools should be established throughout the country, that more systematic and sustained efforts should be made for the education of the masses, and that an unstinted measure of encouragement should be extended to private enterprise towards the furtherance of education by state-grants and scholarships. It has to be noticed that having regard to the aptitude of the people and to the extraordinary zeal and eagerness evinced by them for the spread of education, it was further laid down, that *Government should be*

reluctant to open Government institutions whenever private institutions could be expected or encouraged to do the work. Under the inspiring influence of this noble policy a great impetus was given to the cause of education, and colleges and schools rapidly increased throughout the country. This policy continued in its uninterrupted course till 1882 when under the Government of Lord Ripon another Education Commission was appointed for the further development of the educational system. Lord Ripon, considering the inadequate number of Universities, conceived the idea of adding two more Universities, one of which he himself established at Lahore in 1882, and the other was established by his successor at Allahabad in 1887.

But here dropped the curtain over the educational progress of India. The growing clamour of the people for increased rights and privileges and their incessant demand for participation in the administration of the country led a nervous bureaucracy to regard education in the same light as it was regarded in 1857. The people having their mind and ideas expanded by Western education were aspiring to Western institutions. It was indeed the dawning of "the proudest day of England" which Macaulay in his prophetic vision had foreseen and anticipated nearly seventy years before. But unfortunately for India and England, with the advent of Lord Curzon, the educational policy of the Government underwent a marked transformation.

Lord Curzon came in 1899 with twelve problems in his pocket for the execution of which he obtained unfortunately for himself as well as for India a further extension of his office during which the "brilliant Viceroy," in the name of efficiency, set back the hand of progress in almost every direction, education receiving his foremost attention. It was a veritable Pandora's Box that he carried which let loose all the forces of unrest, dislocating the existing order of things, reversing past policies and filling the minds of the people with concern and anxiety, hope alone remaining. Here were sown the seeds of that discontent which a Milton might well have invoked his muse to sing and from which both the Goverrnment and the

country have been reaping so abundantly. His educational policy of 1902 culminating in the Indian Universities Act of 1904 dealt a death-blow to the further expansion of education and by its stringent rules and regulations sapped all indigenous enterprise for its furtber development. It was argued that the previous policy had served to extend the surface at the sacrifice of depth, and that a shearing process was necessary to check all superfluous growth. Pruning is undoubtedly good, but the use of the pruning knife on a growing plant before it has put forth abundant leaves and branches is an operation which is calculated more to destroy than to improve. These rules and regulations would have been unobjectionable if only equal care had been taken for the proper accommodation of the ever increasing influx of boys pressing every year for admission into the existing institutions. Hundreds of young men are debarred from the colleges and thousands of boys are thrown out of schools and turned adrift aimless and unequipped into this world to fight out the battle of life. It is an undeniable fact that within the narrow scope of the present regulations some improvements have been effected and larger grants have in recents years been made for education; but it cannot be overlooked that nearly 40 per cent. of these grants are absorbed in supervision and superintendence while general education as well as the lower educational services are being practically starved. Depth may be preferred to surface, but a "top heavy" construction is always unsafe to any structure with the deepest foundation which human ingenuity may devise. In a country which, with the exception of Russia, is larger than the continent of Europe, there are now no more than 150 Colleges of all sorts and a little over 1,300 High Schools and 1,27,000 Primary Schools for the education of the masses for a population of over 255 milions, and yielding a percentage of barely 7 literate men out of this vast population. It may be noted here that two-thirds of these Colleges and three-fourths of the High Schools are private Institutions. This is the sum-total of educational progress made under a benevolent despotism during a period of 160 years and imagination fails to pierce into the dim and

distant future when even half the population of this vast continent shall be so far advanced as to be able to read and write their names. That is how education stands in the country after more than one and a half century of British rule, and yet a modest Bill introduced by a Congressman for Elementary Education was thrown out with a few complimentary platitudes. The people demand a general diffusion of elementary education for the mass as preferable to no education, while Government insists upon better education for a few rather than wide-spread light for the many. No one can reasonably object to the quality of education for the few being improved, but a belief has gained ground in the public mind, not without some show of reason, that Government has begun to view the educational problem with suspicion and distrust and to reverse the engine for a backward motion. There is, however, no room for doubt that under the plea for creating a "serene atmosphere of education" political considerations have been largely introduced in the department of Education. In driving out the wooden chip the iron nail has been thrust in. Teachers have turned into spies and not in a few cases are Superintendents suspected of having assumed the role of C. I. D. officers. The sanctity of the temples of learning has been violated and our boys and young men are brought up in the unhealthy atmosphere of what may be called insecure jails. This the people sorely resent and here the first conflict has taken place between a sensitive subject race and an autocratic Government, each believing the other to be in the wrong and neither trusting the other either for mutual understanding or for a rational settlement of the question. The Patna University Bill, which empowers the Chancellor to deal with any matter connected with the University in any manner "that may seem to him to be fit and proper" after making an enquiry to be made in any manner that he may think fit, places university education in a large Province entirely under the arbitrary authority of the Lieutenant-Governor of Behar, and it makes the spread of higher education impossible by practically prohibiting the establishment of new colleges.

THE ADMINISTRATION

The next point of conflict lies in the administration itself. It is a preposterous attempt to compel a child to lisp when he is able to speak and force him to crawl on his knees, when he is able to walk on his legs. It is no rebellion in the adult members of a family to exercise their discretion and judgment and even to interfere, to some extent, in the management of its affairs, and a reasonable *Pater familia* sought cheerfully to accept a change which is calculated only to relieve and not to dethrone him. What is true of a family is also true of a paternal government. A government must always conform itself to its changing environments and adapt itself to the ideas and requirements of the community which it is called upon to govern. The highest claim of British rule in India is not founded upon its military strength but upon its moral grandeur. Security of life and property is no doubt one of the highest attributes of a settled government, but this attribute is more or less to be found among backward, uncivilised governments anxious for their own existence. A pure form of administration of justice is the bedrock of a civilised Government and it is this administration of justice which more than anything else has laid broad and deep the foundations of British rule in India resting upon the affection and confidence of the people. Anything which tends to undermine that foundation is, therefore, fraught with danger to the superstructure. As men are born free they naturally value their life and liberty infinitely more than their property. For property is a man's accident, while liberty is his birth-right. In every country, therefore, the administration of criminal justice which affects life and liberty is viewed with much greater interest than the administration of civil justice and that is why even in this country lawyers find the criminal branch of their profession more lucrative than the civil one. In fact the administration of criminal justice in any country is more a political question than a mere settlement of private disputes. The greatest defect in the administration of criminal justice in this country lies in

the fusion and combination of the judicial and the executive functions—a system in which the prosecutor and the judge, the man who works up a charge and the man who sits in judgment over that charge, are rolled into one. For thirty years the Congress has cried hoarse for the separation of this unholy combination, hundreds of cases from unimpeachable and unchallenged records have been cited from year to year to illustrate the baneful results of the system which is calculated more than anything else, to shake the confidence of the people in the integrity of the administration of justice. Cases have occurred—and they are not few and far between—where racial considerations have outweighed the demands of justice, and the life of an Indian has not received greater consideration than that of a crab or a tortoise. There are of course men who are strong enough to challenge and drive discontent underground, but no one has the power to see underground and watch the secret progress which such discontent silently works in its subterranean course. One complete generation has passed away since the Indian National Congress first drew the attention of Government to the danger underlying this inequitable system. One Viceroy considered his duty discharged by calling the proposal of the Congress a "Counsel of perfection": two successive Secretaries of State vied with each other in their pious wish to inaugurate this reform; while at least one Indian administrator denounced the existing system as being unworthy of "rational beings." But the system still continues and seems to possess a charmed life which defies both a natural and a violent death. Sir Harvey Adamson was reported to have actually gone so far as to submit a scheme for the proposed reform in 1908, and all sorts of speculations have been afloat in recent years; but nobody knows where the proposal sticks and where it now rests,—whether on the dusty upper shelves of the Indian Secretariat at Simla or in the archives of the India Office at Whitehall. Wherever it may lie its fate has so far been determined by the spirit of bureaucratic rule nervous to part with the narrowest shred of authority. If this one reform had been carried out one half of the

causes of the present discontent would have vanished, and it is just possible that the ugly developments with which the Government is at present confronted might never have appeared.

THE PRESS ACT AND THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS

The next point of conflict between the bureaucracy and the people has reference to the Liberty of the Press. The Press is entirely a Western institution so firmly ingrafted with Western education and incorporated with Western methods of administration, that it is now impossible to retain the one and remove the other. In every civilised country the Press has played the double role of the educator of the public and the interpreter to the Government. In India the Press, with all its defects and lapses, as well as its numerous difficulties and disabilities, has played an important part in the evolution of National life, and its chequered history is no mean evidence of the firm hold it has over the public mind and the sustaining energies of a growing people. It is not necessary to pursue that history. Suffice it to say that since the repeal of Lord Lytton's Gagging Act of 1878 the Indian Press steadily grew into a power which, with a little more sympathetic treatment might easily have been converted into a useful adjunct of the administration. Unfortunately, however, the Anglo-Indian Press began to be jealous of its formidable rival and the bureaucracy grew nervous of its strength. An ugly development for which the Indian Press was no more responsible than for the collision which took place at this time between the *Campertown* and the *Victoria* in the Atlantic, furnished an excuse and afforded an opportunity for again muzzling the Press in a way unprecedented in the history of any civilised country where a public Press exists. The Press Act of 1910, conceived in a spirit of repression, has reduced the Indian Press from its position as an independent critic of the Government to that of an institution entirely dependent upon sufferance. Within this short period of less than seven years there has been a regular carnival of Press prosecutions in which newspapers

have been suppressed, printing presses confiscated and their securities forfeited to an extent which has bewildered the public and alarmed the journalists. According to a statement furnished by Sir Reginald Craddock in February last, there were no less than six Press prosecutions and in no less than five cases, securities of newspapers were enhanced and no less than two hundred and twenty newspapers, both English and vernacular, ceased publication since the outbreak of the War and up to that date. The liberty of the Indian Press is practically gone and the highest tribunals in the land have declared themselves powerless to protect it. When the Act was passed the extreme rigour of the measure was admitted, but an assurance was given that it would be administered with care and consideration. Whether that assurance has been honoured more in its breach than in its observance may be left to the judgment of the public. And last, not least, an extraordinary woman, Irish by birth, English by marriage and Indian by adoption, has been caught in the meshes of this Act, and the provisions of the Defence Act are set in operation to coerce and restrain her. One Government has under cover of the latter, interdicted Mrs. Besant from profaning its sacred territories with the touch of her feet, while another Government, acting under the former, not content with forfeiting the security of an old press, has demanded an exorbitant security for her paper which threatens it with extinction. Gentlemen, how fast doth contagion spread! Before I could finish writing these pages another Government has issued orders prohibiting her at the eleventh hour not to attend a religious conference held within its territories. I should not be surprised if the British public were to doubt the accuracy of this statement. The lame excuse offered by the Central Provinces Government for its extraordinary action has, however, failed to satisfy the Indian public. Mrs. Besant is as yet free—I use the word subject to correction—to live in British India and to travel over British India, but not to cross the Vindhya Chains and touch the sacred soil of Bombay and the Central Provinces. Are

Bombay and the Central Provinces outside British India? She is charged by the Madras Government with matter seditious printed at her press. The Madras High Court has distinctly found that there was nothing seditious in her writing. Two High Courts have concurrently held that there may be illegal forfeitures under this Act and yet they were powerless to grant any relief. The appellate powers of the High Courts under the Act are a delusion and a snare. Yet there seems to be no disposition on the part of the Government either to withdraw or to modify this retrograde measure, although where a necessity for the bureaucracy arises, a Bill may be passed at one sitting of the Council and a Validating Act rushed through to legalise its illegal proceedings. So much for the Law Member's assurances and promises upon the strength of which the Indian members of the Council were led to vote for this dangerous enactment in their desire to help the Government at a critical moment. We may not see eye to eye with Mrs. Besant in many matters, but our hearts go forth to her in her trials and tribulations which not only affect her personal interests but are also a standing menace to the liberties of the Indian subjects of His Majesty. What is Mrs. Besant's offence? Is it that she loves India as she loves her own native land? What is her offence? Is it that her womanly instinct has led her to raise her voice in defence of the rights and liberties of a subject race, whose present condition, as contrasted with its ancient civilisation and departed glories, has found a place in her sympathies and got a hold upon her imagination, to which many people of her race are either blind or impervious? The days of chivalry are gone and even womanhood is no protection against bureaucratic insensibilities. If she is seditious, why not try her for sedition in an open Court where, if convicted she will cease to be idolised as a martyr? I hope the matter will not rest here, but will be carried beyond the seas and heard in a free country and by a free people before whose tribunal even an heir-apparent to the Throne bows as low as the humblest subject of the realm to receive his judgment. The shrieks of a dying press, which have been so far drowned in the tumults of a

devastating war, will not then go altogether unheeded. Laws may be enacted here to stifle the voice of public opinion, but a great nation nurtured on the lap of freedom cannot long tolerate a method of administration which is so entirely repugnant to its instinct and tradition. It only requires to be correctly informed and duly impressed. It may be difficult to move it; but once in motion, even the omnipotent power of the bureaucracy will not avail to arrest its onward march towards the establishment of freedom in this land.

The sufferings of Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak are well-known to the public. I am here neither to defend nor to denounce him. The latest proceedings which were instituted against him at Poona, have, however, raised a grave issue which cannot be passed over. I cannot persuade myself to believe that in initiating these proceedings the authorities were actuated by any unworthy motive. But I deeply regret that Government was ill-advised in taking them at a time and under circumstances where its action was liable to be misconstrued. In disposing of this case, Sir Stanley Batchelor has enunciated a law, the correctness of which seems to be open to grave doubts. He says that the condemnation of the Civil Service *en bloc* is tantamount to a condemnation of the Sovereign authority, as the service is an agent of that authority. Carried to its legitimate consequences, this dictum would be a bar to any criticism against any of the services. The Criminal Intelligence Department is at present in closer touch with the Government than even the Civil Service and may be regarded, as such, a more accredited agent of the Government. And what is there to prevent the principle here enunciated from being applied to that department, or to the Police in general, and for the matter of that to the village chowkidars? The law of Agency cannot apply to the relation between the Crown and its servants. Some years back, this question was pointedly raised when Sir George Campbell who was not inaptly called the Tiberius of the Indian Civil Service charged the *Hindu Patriot* with "ill-will towards Government" for its strong

criticism of the Civil Service. The late Kristodas Pal most forcibly and faithfully drew this distinction between the state and the service. He said :

The words "ill-will to Government", are not however explicit. Is the word Government in the phrase intended to mean the Queen's government or the Local Administration ?—The ruling power or the executive agency ?—The Sovereign mistress of the Empire, or her officers in the country ? None is better aware than His Honour that the Supreme Power and the administrative authority are quite distinct; and nowhere is this distinction made so broadly and clearly as in England. When, for instance, Mr. Disraeli denounced the other day the present Government of Her Majesty as 'blundering and plundering,' it would be a gross perversion of language to interpret this imputation into 'ill-will to Government,' that is, the Sovereign authority, the Queen herself. It would be impertinent in me to remark that if criticisms of public men and measures be construed into 'ill-will to Government' there is not a single journal in this country, with the slightest pretence to independence, which would not be open to this charge.

In our own times, the fulminations of Sir Edward Carson inciting the Ulstermen to stand against the established government in England are still fresh in the minds of the public and yet this leader of the Orangemen was not considered unworthy of receiving an invitation to a conference from the King himself. In India by a strange irony of fate even the long-established principles of law easily yield to much wider interpretation and judges are not wanting who hold that a sharp criticism of even a member of the ruling race is equivalent to a contempt of the Government itself. Gentlemen, the ill-starred definition of *disaffection* has died out; but here arises another alarming dictum which should engage your serious attention.

THE ARMS ACT

The Indian Arms Act is another source of irritation which has estranged the feeling between the people and the governing class. Apart from the invidious and irritating character of this measure it has emasculaled a whole nation, degraded them not only in their own estimation, but also in the estimation of other races not in any way superior to them, and reduced them to a condition of

absolute helplessness. It has stunted the growth of a people, dwarfed its mental stature and debased its moral character, by depriving it of its sense of national self-respect. It has reduced it to the position of political *pariahs* smarting under disgrace and without any sense of responsibility. Maharajah Jabbar Jung Bahadur may not carry a single revolver for his own protection but his driver Jones may have any number of them for his pastime, for purpose of illicit sale, and for shooting not only pheasants but also sometimes a poor Indian peasant whom he may easily mistake for a pig. But all bad measures are like the devil's engine which must at one time or other recoil back on him who uses it, and this is what has happened. It is as easy to govern a country by disarming its entire population as to convert a whole country into a jail. Anarchism has reared its head and there has been a recrudescence of lawlessness in some parts of the country. Dastardly assassinations are committed in crowded cities in broad daylight and daring robberies are committed like candle-light performances in an Opera House. The reply to all this, which has so far been vouchsafed, is that the people are cowards and are unable to help themselves. But whose fault is it if the people are cowards and unable to help themselves? Is it of the people who have been made cowards and helpless, or of those who have made them so? It is quite refreshing to hear of people seriously advised to arm themselves with brickbats and bamboo *lathies* to face an armed band of robbers and assassins equipped with Martini rifles and Mauser revolvers. Example is said to be better than precept, and those who indulge in ludicrous advice of this sort would do infinitely better to set an example themselves before they can persuade others to follow them. Even Hercules did not venture to challenge the Larnian Hydra without his club. The Arms Act has been practically reduced to a dead letter, for the lawless few are never in want of any firearms, but it is the law-abiding many that have been deprived of the use of them. A great empire and a littte mind are said to go ill together And where the spirit of confidence is wanting in an

administration its means and measures must be weak and self-contradictory and thus ultimately defeating its own end.

THE DEFENCE OF INDIA ACT AND INTERNMENTS

And now, where other repressive measures have failed to restore peace and order in the country, a deadlier instrument has been put into requisition. A desperate situation no doubt calls for a drastic remedy and no one has a right to complain if Government is obliged to take an extreme precautionary measure in view of a conflagration which is now devastating all the five continents of the world. The Defence of India Act like the Defence of the Realm Act in England was no doubt necessitated by the exigencies of the situation, but the purposes to which it is being used appear to be entirely foreign to the spirit and outside the scope of this extraordinary enactment, while the safeguards provided in the home-measure have been wholly dispensed with in its operation in this country. Again, when the Act was passed, an assurance was not wanting that it would be administered with great care and consideration. It was undoubtedly an Emergency Act necessitated by the extraordinary circumstances which suspended the ordinary course of law and vested the administration of justice in certain cases entirely in the Executive Government of the country.

Gentlemen, the sting of every repressive measure is in its tail. There is a small clause in these enactments which passes without any debate in the Legislative Council authorising the Executive Government to frame rules to give effect to the operation of such a measure. These rules hatched in secret beyond the kin of the established legislature and beyond the scope of public criticism, suddenly emanate full panoplied like Minerva springing out of Jupiter's head. These rules sometimes thrice the size and volume of the Act itself, govern the proceedings. In the case of the Defence of India Act, Section 2 provides this brief little authority which is now deciding the fate not only of so many young men but

also of some of the public men in the country without a trial and without a hearing. The Act provides the slender safeguards of a special tribunal final in its decision; but the rules have taken away even this safeguard in cases of internments and interdictions provided by clause (f) of section 2 of the enactment. A man may invoke the aid of the tribunal if he violates the rules but not when the rules are enforced against him. It may be no injustice done to characterise it as "Jedburgh Justice." The Defence of India Act is essentially a war-measure and although the expression "Safety of India" is introduced in its preamble, it clearly indicates such safety as may be jeopardised only by the war-conditions with the enemy. It never could have been intended to cover public peace and tranquillity in the internal administration of the country for which ample provisions already exist in the existing law of the land. Is there any evidence that the assassinations, dastardly as they are, which are perpetrated mostly against Indian police officers, and some of which took place even before the Serajevo-outrage, have any connection with German intrigue, or is there anything to show that the property plundered in course of armed brigandage find their way or even intended to find their way to the German Exchequer? The assassinations of Earl Mayo and Chief Justice Norman and even the more recent murders of Rand and Ayerst and of Judge Jackson did not necessitate such a measure. It is clear, therefore, that the Defence of India Act was never intended for internal administration at home, but only to govern external relations with the enemy countries abroad. But how sad it is to contemplate that it has been so widely diverted from its legitimate scope, and how are its provisions being applied in India! A secret murder perpetrated and burglary committed, and, in fact, every piece of a diabolical crime, whether committed before or after the outbreak of hostilities, where the criminals cannot be detected and punished under the ordinary law of the land, are made the occasion for the use of this lawless law. Where an accused person is tried and acquitted by a court of justice he is good for a capture under the provisions

of this Act. In one province alone nearly 600 young men have, up to this time, been arrested, a considerable number of whom have already been domiciled in different parts of the country, while others are passing through their purgatory in the gloomy cells of Dallanda House, preparatory to the receipt of their judgment. These proceedings are generally believed to be based upon the informations supplied by the spies whose occupation would be gone if their activities could not be maintained. We are told that the final judgment in these cases is vested in an officer who is "fit to be a High Court Judge." Yes, but the misfortune is that after all he *is not* a High Court Judge and that makes a world-wide difference. He does not breathe the atmosphere of a High Court, he is not swayed by considerations of a High Court and he has not the means and materials of a High Court Judge, and it is no consolation to the people to learn that he is fit to be a High Court Judge. Then it would be something if this would-be High Court Judge were allowed to dispose of these cases in the presence of the accused persons sitting even *in camera*. Even Roger Casement, charged with the blackest of crimes—the charge of high treason and conspiracy with the enemy of the King—had an open trial and a right of appeal. Are the destinies under the Defence of India Act guilty of more heinous crimes and misdemeanour ? Even the certificate of a District Officer or of a Divisional Commissioner affords no protection against the report of spies. Anarchism is the common enemy of mankind throughout the world. In every country and every age civilised humanity has refused to recognise the brotherhood of the secret murderer and the dastardly assassin, and none but an anarchist need defend or support an anarchist. But a general crusade against a community in the name of anarchism is justified neither by reason, nor logic, nor considerations of expediency. The rats are a recognised nuisance and for aught we know they may be also responsible for the plague and the pestilence. But if the rats are so sly as to elude our grasp and so subtle as not to come into the cage laid for them, no man in his senses and even under the greatest

provocation should so far forget himself as to be induced to set fire to the house to get rid of these pests.

THE COLOUR BAR

An almost insurmountable colour bar has been drawn up that runs through almost every department of the state which the children of the soil are forbidden to cross. The entire administration is divided into two compartments, one Imperial and the other Provincial. The boxes are all reserved and it is only the pit which is open to the people. In the Civil Service, in the Educational Service and in the Medical Service everywhere there is a sharp racial distinction irrespective of qualification and competency, which is as arbitrary as it is galling to the feelings and sentiments of the people. Competition, the most effective test of merit, has been superseded by nomination, and offices are largely distributed as mere patronage. The services are visibly deteriorating and strange as it may sound a Government which finds in the caste system of the people such a serious obstacle to their national advancement is sedulously building up an official caste almost as rigid and as exclusive as the Brahmanical hierarchy ever was. The officials have generally lost all touch with the people and there is now no greater passport to public employment than a hereditary claim which grows by what it feeds on. Fusion is the first principle of national growth, but disintegration is the policy of a bureaucracy to counteract that growth.

IMMIGRATION

Gentlemen, it is with a sense of pain, shame and humiliation that I approach the question of immigration and indentured labour. India, the granary of the world, is unable to maintain her surplus population and thousands of her children, like her raw materials, are sent away to other countries for employment for the bare necessaries of life. The immigrants, so absolutely necessary for the development of the resources of South Africa, Australia and Canada, are treated there as helots and India is

regarded to-day throughout the civilised world as the recruiting ground for *coolies* necessary for manual labour. I do not hesitate to denounce this degrading system as the last relic of slavery within the British Empire. The question is said to be not free from difficulties, but all these difficulties are due more in the relation of Great Britain in regard to her self-governing colonies than to the condition of India herself. Mr. Gandhi's heroic struggles in South Africa are fresh in the minds of our people and Lord Hardinge's effort to ameliorate the condition of the Indian settlers in the British Colonies evoked more sharp criticism than active sympathy in the United Kingdom. It is galling that peoples of yesterday who have scarcely a tradition of their own should be permitted to treat as slaves people whose civilisation goes back to the morning of this world. Lord Gladstone in opening the Parliament of the South African Union only a few years ago reminded them of this fact and bore striking testimony to the worth of the Indian people. He said :—

> I have made special study of the Indian history and have later visited India. I wish more South Africans could go there and by so doing rise to the highest appreciation of what the Indians were. They would then think less of India as a country which sends its coolies to the South African Coast. In fact India has developed perhaps far above the line attained by some parts of the British Empire in its civilisation and efforts to rise to a higher life.

But what avails such testimony ? Slaves at home can never be treated as free men abroad. I use the word in the sense in which Mill has used it. "They are slaves," says Mill, "who cannot help themselves." Complete reciprocity and retaliation are the only remedies for this degrading humiliation inflicted upon our people, and Home Rule alone can furnish the necessary prescription. So long as the Canadian, the South African and the Australian are free to settle in India and also to find their way to the public services of the country, no tinkering measure, no controlling wages will solve the question.

THE SWADESHI MOVEMENT & INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Gentlemen, if the ill-fated Swadeshi Movement had been directed in its proper channel and not checked as an unhealthy growth, the question of the industrial development of India, which has now attracted the anxious attention of Government, might have admitted of a much easier solution. The War has disclosed that in 1905 the Indian Nationalists declared hostilities not against Great Britain, but against Germany and Austria, and that if the Authorities in India had taken a more dispassionate and far-sighted view of the situation, German and Austrian trade in India would have died ten years ago and without a naval blockade. The fault, however, did not lie wholly with the Government, but the people had also to bear a share of responsibility. However that may be, the question of re-building Indian industries out of their ashes is not free from serious difficulties, and unless Government is prepared honestly and resolutely to come forward to make atonement for its past sins of commission and omission, it may never be solved. Much is said about the phenomenal progress of Japan and Sir Thomas Holland has recently thrown a flood of light upon her industrial development. But what is the secret of her success? Amidst all the disquisitions and speculations which have gathered round the question, there looms large one fact which can neither be overlooked nor disputed. Japan possesses a National Government which India does not. In Japan there is no clashing of interest between the people and the State, but in India although the interests of the Government may not collide with those of the people, its industrial policy is to a large extent controlled by considerations independent of the interest of India. Gentlemen, I pause here for a moment to thank the Government of the United Provinces which is the only administration that has as yet taken any practical interest in the development of some of our industries.

If, however, for any reason the Government finds itself handicapped in the way of building up new industries on its

own account, as in Japan, it can at any rate do much to help and encourage such industries. It can add a portfolio of industries to the member in charge of Commerce and carry on an investigation through experts as to which industry is best suited to what part of the country, regard being had to the production of raw materials, facilities of communication and labour. Then as Indian capital starts any business on a sound and substantial basis, the Government may come forward to purchase a portion of its shares in order to secure both an effective control over it and an abiding interest in its success. And, above all, it may guarantee to such a concern a certain rate of profit or dividend for a period sufficient to enable it to stand on its own legs, while it may render no inconsiderable help by becoming its customer for its own purposes. It may also remove all unjustifiable excise duties and grant railway concessions. If the Government will do all this, it will discharge its function as a benevolent State and remove the shyness of Indian capital in an unequal competition with its formidable foreign rivals. If this cannot be done the Government will be well advised not to waste its money over academic conferences and commissions to serve no other purpose than that of raising false hopes and aggravating public discontent.

In this connection I would make a passing reference to an important question in regard to which the opinions of public bodies and associations are being sought, but which, as far as I can see, has not excited much public interest—I mean the proposal to transfer the railways to private Companies. It is a great economic question and ought not to be as lightly treated as it appears to have been done in certain unexpected quarters. The Railways are one of the most important State concerns whose earnings constitute by no means an inconsiderable portion of the State revenues. The great highways of trade and commerce are public domain and belong to the State. To transfer them to any private individual or individuals or to allow them to manage them may be an act amounting to a

serious infringement of public rights and an abdication of a State function. We are looking forward to a time when the Government will become national if not in its *personnel* at least in its aims and purposes and the railways owned by the State and controlled by the State will then be conducted upon national lines and will be the handmaid of the national industries by offering facilities for their growth and development. The time has come for the definite acceptance of this policy.

A NATIONAL MILITIA

Gentlemen, no people can be either self-respecting or respected by others unless they are able to defend themselves. A people always dependent upon Government for the safety of their life and property must be an intolerable burden on the State and a source of weakness to it. A vast empire like British India, without a National army, protected by a nominal force of seventy thousand European soldiers and 140 thousand Indian troops may be a wonderful feat; but it is a most dangerous experiment. If the Indians were trained but as volunteers only five years ago, although the Congress has been demanding the privilege for the last twenty-five years, the humiliating spectacle of Lord Kitchener, Lloyd George and Lord Derby alternately coaxing and threatening the British people for raising an army of two millions might easily have been avoided and at all events a general conscription, so distasteful to British tradition, might not have to-day become such an imperative necessity. India, with her teeming millions properly trained and equipped, standing behind England can present an invincible front against any power in the world. The question is not one of men and materials, but of trust and confidence. But has not India given sufficient proof of her fidelity and devotion to the British connection? If not, England must stand self-condemned before the eyes of the civilised world.

Such is the situation. Bureaucracy has accomplished its work. It has established order and tranquillity. But it has outgrown itself. Its continued existence is fraught with mischief and unable to cope with the rising forces of

popular opinion and with the demands created with the new spirit, it has had recourse to a policy which has excited grave public discontent. What then is to be the remedy? That remedy is what has been so effectively applied in other countries similarly circumstanced; and the remedy which suggests itself to the Indian mind, as it occurred to John Stuart Mill and to Edmund Burke, lies in the grant of

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

Call it Home Rule, call it Self-Rule, call it *Swaraj*, call it Self Government, it is all one and the same thing—it is Representative Government. The idea is not a new one, nor is it the revelation of any evangelist. As far as I am aware, the idea dawned upon the people in 1882 when the agitation on the Ilbert Bill first revealed to the people the helplessness of their situation. A *National League* was then formed and a burning pamphlet called the *Star in the East* was issued which was written in a style and langauge which, if employed at the present day, would have surely stranded the writer in serious difficulties. Lord Ripon fully anticipated the demand when in his famous Resolution of January 1882, he told the people that "Local Self-Government must precede national Self-Government." Although the first Indian National Congress passed no resolution directly bearing on the question, the notification under which it was called into existence clearly stated that one of the objects of the future assembly was

indirectly to form the germ of an Indian Parliament which, if properly conducted, will constitute in a few years an unanswerable reply to the assertion that India is still wholly unfit for any form of representative institution.

And Mrs. Annie Besant in her admirable book, *How India Wrought for Freedom*, has pointedly referred to the utterance of the Grand Old Man of India which clearly foreshadowed the coming demand of the Indian people for self-government. Ever since then the idea worked and matured itself when in the brilliant session of the Congress in 1906, it found an emphatic and unequivocal pronouncement from the very same patriarch of the Indian political

world in his trumpet-call for *Swaraj* which has since then stirred the Indian mind to its utmost depth to find the true remedy which it had so far sought in vain. A generation has passed away but a generation has risen whose sole and whole-hearted demand is nothing short of Self-Government as the sovereign remedy for the present unsatisfactory situation. A cry has, however, been raised that we are not yet fit for self-government. Procrastination is the proverbial thief of time. It is also the orthodox plea of a frame of mind which, unable to cope with an untenable position, only asks for an adjournment to seek for a compromise on the most favourable terms.

But before we proceed to discuss this question, we must first divest ourselves of the dogmatism which prevails with equal force, though not with equal authority, on both sides, and try to understand the question in the light of the unanswerable logic of facts. Let us see what are the requisites of Self-Government and how far the Indian people possess these requisites to reasonably demand self-government.

THREE CONDITIONS OF J. S. MILL

John Stuart Mill in his book on "Representative Government" lays down three conditions for Self-Government which are now universally accepted by all writers on political philosophy. These conditions are: 1st, that the people for whom the form of government is intended should be willing to accept it; 2nd, that they must be willing and able to do what is necessary to keep it standing; and 3rd that they must be willing and able to do what it requires of them to enable it to fulfil its purposes. To these three tests I will add a fourth, by way of a rider directly to meet the argument of our critics,—have the people given satisfactory evidence of their capacity for Self-Government?

EDUCATION NO TEST

It will be noticed that Mill nowhere lays down Education as a separate and independent test for Self-Government and this is for a very good reason. Education no doubt sharpens and stimulates the other tests;

but it cannot be the sole or even the main test for a National Government. The Hindus in the 13th century and the Mussalmans of India in the 18th century were the masters of no inconsiderable share of unprofitable learning; but it neither developed their national solidarity, nor strengthened their national character, and both in their turn fell an easy prey to a superior force. The Mahomedan historian admits that India was conquered not by superior education, but by superior Islamic national solidarity and strength. On the other hand the Slave Republic of Liberia was established by an uneducated mass of emigrants from America upon their liberation towards the beginning of the 19th century. Then take the case of Europe. There also education has not played a very important part in determining the form of Government suited to each country. According to the latest statistics available Norway and Sweden carry the largest percentage of educated population, it being 97, England has a percentage of 87, France 78, Germany 91 and Portugal 56. If education had been the determining factor, Norway and Sweden would not have been practically an absolute Monarchy and France or Portugal a Republic, while Germany would have long ceased to be a military despotism where a subaltern can with impunity punish judges and magistrates for the grave offence of not being deferential to his uniform and the theory of the *Superman* sways the minds of 80 millions of human beings of the highest culture and erudition in the world. What was the education of England during the reign of Charles I, and was not the *Magna Charta* wrested from a despotic king by a band of uneducated barons who could sign their names only by scrolls and marks?

In 1821 there were nearly 18,500 schools with 650,000 scholars in Great Britain. In the year 1858 the number of schools rose to 122,000 and the scholars to over 3,000,000. We have it on the authority of the Education Commission of 1882 that prior to 1854 when the first Educational Despatch of Sir Charles Wood was issued there were merely a million students in British

India receiving elementary education in the various indigenous institutions. The statement of the Member of Education in 1914 shows that there are at present 127,000 schools with over 5,000,000 scholars receiving such education. It would thus appear that the number and the percentage of literates in Great Britain in the reign of George IV were not higher than those of India in the reign of His Gracious Majesty George V, and that the number, though not the percentage, of literates in India in 1914 does not compare very unfavourably with that of Great Britain in 1858. And yet what *was* the constitution of Great Britain in 1821 and what is the constitution of British India in 1916! Education therefore, though it may help and promote Self-Government, is not an indispensable condition or a condition precedent to Self-Government.

FIRST CONDITION

The first condition needs no much elaboration, as the willingness of the people for self-government is not only admitted, but is said to be premature and somewhat extravagant. The press and the platform even in their present muzzled condition are ringing with the cry for Self-Government and on every occasion whether in the heated Council Chambers or in the serene atmosphere of literary discussions, there is an insistent demand for Self-Government as the only remedy for the present situation.

SECOND AND THIRD CONDITION

The second and the third conditions may be considered together. India, self-contained and contented, with its natural defences and internal resources, presents a bulwark against all foreign aggression. Its danger is not from without but from within. During the last sixty years since the Crown has assumed the reigns of government, it must be admitted that there has not been even the ripple of a disturbance and the people, educated or uneducated, despite all their vexations and disappointments, their hardships, their grievances and the irritating which have so often provoked their patience, have throughout stood fast by

the Crown. They have protested, but have nowhere resisted the measures of the Government. Since the outbreak of the war, India has been practically denuded of soldiers and it has been possible for Government to maintain peace and order throughout the vast country with only the help of the police as it exists in India. Those who recklessly cry "the wolf" ought to know that if the wolf had really been anywhere in the field, it would not have been possible long to indulge in this foolish trick. It ought to be fairly conceded that the credit of this remarkable achievement is evenly divided between the Government and the people—the confidence of the people in the Government and the trust of the Government in the people; and that any attempt on the part of either to appropriate it to itself the whole credit, is an absurd pretension. The spirit of co-operation and self-help infused into the minds of our people mainly by the inspiring breath of the Congress, and the numberless societies, missions and associations which have sprung up throughout the country with philanthropic and other aims and objects, are sufficiently indicative of the quickening of a national life, and the courage and endurance displayed by our young men in every public cause, are all unmistakable evidence of the readiness of the people to support the administration. In flood and famine, in fires and fairs and in other positions of dangers, difficulties and distress there are thousands of young men who eagerly rush forward to help the administration without waiting for recognition or expecting any reward and despite police surveillance to which they are subjected. The Hospital Ships furnished by Bombay and Madras, the Ambulance Corps and the Double Company provided by Bengal and the various war funds raised throughout the country are no mean evidence of the willingness and readiness of the people to co-operate with the administration. All these, in my opinion, afford striking evidence of the devotion and the capacity for self-sacrifice which our countrymen are prepared to incur in the public interests and which constitute the most valuable qualification for self-rule. This shows that our people are willing and able to make the Government stand and are ready to make the necessary

sacrifices for the establishment of National Government. Lapses no doubt there are, but do they not occur even among people invested with full measure of self-government? A National Government would shift the burden as well as its odium and unpopularity from the state to the people and would necessarily make them still more alive to their responsibilities. It is power which creates responsibility. Responsibility without power is a debt without security which cannot be enforced if left undischarged.

It was George Yule who, twenty years ago, speaking at the first Congress held in the United Provinces, said that all political agitations have to pass through three stages—that of Ridicule, Opposition and Concession. We have long passed the stage of Ridicule and almost passed the second stage and we are now practically on the debatable ground between Opposition and Concession, standing more on the firm soil of the latter than on the slippery ground of the former.

"NOT YET"

There are, however, those who say "not yet." Not yet! Then 'when'?—asks the Indian Nationalist. But here the Oracle is dumb and Echo only answers—'when'! Edwin Bevan's parable of "the Patient and the Steel frame" is cited and the people are strictly enjoined to lie in peace and possess their souls in patience until their political *Nirvana* is accomplished. Similie and metaphors are not safe-guides in practical life, for all fables are but fallacies clothed in equivocal language which captivates the imagination and deludes the reason. For even the patient in the "steel frame" requires a gradual relaxation and occasional readjustment of his splints and bandages and, above all, a steady, substantial improvement in his dietary arrangements, as after all it is the food and nurishment and not the splint and bandages, that are calculated to give him strength and cure him of his injuries. You cannot indefinitely keep him on milk and sago to help either the "knitting of the bones" or the "granulation of the flesh." Our critics however would enjoin "perfect

quiet and repose" without prescribing any kind of diet until the people shall have, in their spirit of quiescence, fully recovered themselves in their steel frame. If any illustration were actually needed, one might fairly suggest that the case of either the swimmer or the rider would probably furnish a more apposite object lesson. You cannot expect the one to be an expert jockey without training him on the back of a horse, as you cannot expect the other to be an expert swimmer without allowing him to go into water. There must be repeated falls and duckings before any efficiency can be attained by either. Admitting for argument's sake—and there can be no prejudice in such an admission—that the Indians are not yet as fit for self-government as the Europeans are, does it follow that they must only patiently contemplate in their steel frame without a stir till the day of their release ? If that be so the day of their redemption will, in all probability, maintain its ever receding distance and the vision of the patient never realised. There is a school for the lawyer, the physician, the educationist and the engineer where he can obtain his passport and begin his profession ; but is there any school or college where an aspirant can be admitted to his degree for Self-Government ? It is through Self-Government that the art of Self-Government can be either taught or acquired. One must be drilled in the art of administration before he can acquire the steady use of his faculties in the work of practical administration. In the words of Mr. Gladstone, it is the institution of Self-Government which constitutes the best training ground for Self-Government. It is through failure that success can be achieved in practical politics. Such failure was fully anticipated by Lord Ripon in his famous Resolution of 1882, and it is through such failures that the British people have obtained the constitution of which they are so justly proud. In the reigns of James I, Charles I and his successors, what was the British constitution and the status of the British people when Parliament could be summoned or dismissed at the pleasure of a despotic sovereign and titles and offices were freely bought and sold without any regard to public interest ? The mass of people were

steeped in ignorance, while the highest officers in the State were not sometimes free from intrigue and corruption. Yet the British people fought for their rights and liberties and obtained them in the midst of these unfavourable conditions. If they had ever allowed themselves to be kept in a steel frame until "nature resumed her active process," where would have been the splendid fabric of British constitutional freedom to-day? Nature never helps those who do not help themselves.

ARE INDIANS FIT FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT?

Now let us turn to a discussion of the rider which was started at the beginning of this question. Gentlemen, our critics have already begun sorting our politicians. I do not pretend to be a politician; but even if I were one, I would far rather go with the "politicians of the baser sort" than agree to rise one degree higher, or one degree lower as you may choose to call it, in the estimation of our critics, while as to the superlative degree I would ungrudgingly have it reserved for those who have so far forgotten the traditions of their own race as to completely divest themselves of the instincts of a free and liberty-loving people to which they ethnologically belong. The question to be answered is—Have the Indian people given fair proof of their capacity for self-government? I do not like to indulge in theories. Let facts answer.

INDIANS IN THE NATIVE STATES

India possesses an area of 1,800,000 square miles with a population of 316 millions, of which over 700,000 square miles, or more than one-third of this area, with a population of over 70 millions, or close upon one-fourth, belong to the independent Native States. Now these States are entirely managed by Indian administrators, and it has to be admitted that some of them are marching ahead of British India in certain directions, particularly in respect of education, judicial reforms and industrial development which are the most sacred functions of a constitutional government. It must be borne in mind that not a few of these distinguished administrators who have achieved such brilliant results in the administration of these

States are sometimes drawn from His Majesty's subjects in British India. Men like Sir Salar Jung, Sir Dinkar Rao, Sir T. Madhava Rao, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Rao Bahadur Sirdar Sansar Chandra Sen, Dewan Bahadur Raghunath Rao, Mr. Romesh Chandra Dutt, Sir Seshiah Shastri, Mr. Ranga Charlu, Mr. Gouri Shankar Ojha, Mr. Seshadri Aiyer, Mr. B. L. Gupta, Mr. Nilambar Mukherjee and Mr. A. R. Banerjee who have governed various Native States with such consummate ability and conspicuous success, have indisputably vindicated the capacity of their countrymen for the highest administrative offices. They have shown that if commanded by their Sovereign they were fit to hold any portfolio in the Government of India. If these distinguished administrators had their lot cast solely in British India, many of them would have in all probability ended their careers as deputy-magistrates, a few as district officers and fewer still as officiating commissioners of divisions.

INDIANS IN THE VARIOUS SERVICES

Then, have not Indians in British India given practical proof of their administrative capacity to qualify themselves for Self-Government? Have they not in the charge of districts both as judicial and executive officers, and have they not in charge of divisions or of a board of revenue, or in the intricate department of audit and account given sufficient evidence of their ability and capacity for efficient administration? Have they not been tried in the humbler stages of local self-government as well as in the higher legislative assemblies? They have been tried in the inner circles of the Provincial as well as the Imperial administrations and they have been also tried at the real seat of authority in Whitehall. True, Sir S. P. Sinha might never have aspired to the chair occupied by Maine and Macaulay; but has England sent any more Maines and Macaulays to fill that chair? Or was Sir S. P. Sinha or Sir Syed Ali Imam an altogether unworthy successor of Sir James Stephen or Sir C. P. Ilbert? In the great department of administration of justice they have been tried in the highest tribunals of the land where they have

acted and are acting as Chief Justices is with as much credit and distinction as any brought out from England, while in the domain of Education they have as Vice-Chancellors managed important Universities in a way which has extorted the admiration, if not the envy, of the most captious critics. They have also managed with remarkable success the affairs of one of the foremost, if not the foremost, corporations in the country. All these they have done, and if they have not done more, it is their misfortune and not their fault.

OTHER QUALIFICATIONS

Self-control, strength of mind and fidelity are among the highest virtues of an administrator, and judged by these tests, have not Indians acquitted themselves in a manner worthy of the best traditions of any service in the world? Sir Satyendra Prasanna Sinha's resignation of his seat in the Executive Council is still a mystery to the public. But whatever may be its solution, it is an open secret that at a critical time he withdrew the resignation that he had tendered and stood loyally by the Government. Has any body ever heard the faintest whisper of this incident from the lips of Sir Satyendra Prasanna Sinha? Then take another case. The Partition of Bengal had stirred the people of Bengal to a state of feverish excitement unprecedented in their history. Petitions and protests of Viceroys and Ministers were of no avail and after seven years of persistant agitation, the people were awaiting in breathless suspense the decision of His Majesty. A despatch from the Governor-General in Council recommended a modification of the Partition in August 1911 and Sir Syed Ali Imam was one of the signatories to the eventful document. Yet on the 12th December the Royal Proclamation came as a complete surprise both upon the Local Governments as well as upon the people. The Partition was said to have been effected in the interest of the Mahomedans. But did Sir Syed Ali Imam either in his quivering lips or tell-tale eyes betray in the slightest degree the dead secret of the prison house within this anxious period of five months?

THE OBJECTIONS

The most orthodox argument, in fact the only argument, now advanced against this natural and legitimate demand is, that the mass are silent and have not joined in the cry. This is an ingenuous argument; for an inarticulate mass will never speak and the reforms will not come. But have the mass at any time and in any country spoken out before any reform has been granted? The hydra-headed mass speak only in times of rebellion or revolution and even then under the inspiration of their leaders who rise out of the educated minority, but their voice is not heard amid a process of silent evolution in the benefits of which they are bound to participate. Did the mass in England cry for the *Magna Charta* or the Petition of Rights or the Reform Bill? The educated few have everywhere represented the ignorant many and history tells us that they have always been their unaccredited spokesmen. And then whose fault is it that the masses in India are dumb and illiterate? The Congress has cried and Congressmen have tried their utmost for the spread of elementary education and they have been told that the time has not yet arrived for universal compulsory education for the masses. We do know if the Astrological Almanac is being consulted for an auspicious day for such an undertaking. It all looks like the trite old, yet never hackneyed, game of "head I win, tail you lose."

SOLICITUDE FOR THE POOR CASTE SYSTEM

Then, as a corollary to the above, a further argument is advanced that there are so many communities and subdivisions in this caste-ridden country that if Self-Government were conceded, King Stork would one by one swallow up all the frogs and a Babel of disorder would follow in which men would run at one another's throats and render settled Government impossible. Such keen solicitude for the poor and the weak is no doubt highly creditable to an enlightened administration; but in a country where more than two-fifths of the population live on insufficient food; where in 42 years there were 22 famines carrying away millions of human beings; a country which

is admittedly the poorest and yet the most heavily taxed as well as burdened with the costliest of administrations; where the average earnings of the free citizen are almost half of what the prisoner in the jail gets for his food and raiment; where floods devastate and malaria decimates without any remedy or redress, while piles of reports and recommendations of commissions and committees cover the archives of the Secretariats; where the poor have often to drink muddy liquids to appease their thirst; and where five out of every six children even in moderately decent families of the poor are allowed to grow up in ignorance—I say in a country like that men may not be wanting who might consider such paternal solicitude as too much of a protestation. I do not at all suggest that the Government of the country is solely or even primarily responsible for everyone of these untoward circumstances; but what I do maintain is that the apprehensions of the Government and its organs are ill-founded and unjustified. No doubt there is the baneful caste system, but there is also the counterbalancing distribution of labour and profession. The caste imposes only social restrictions and no political disabilities. Caste system in one shape or other and to some extent obtains in almost every society, but has nowhere stood as an insurmountable bar in the way of its political or economic development. Then is there no redeeming feature of the Indian social system with all its defects? Is there any country where every home is an asylum for the poor, and where the poor and destitute are fed and clothed by their richer countrymen so generously? Is there any other people among whom the prevailing religions enjoin public charity without distinction of caste, colour or creed to such an extent that it has led the advocates of modern civilisation to characterise it as encouraging "professional mendicancy?" Government no doubt honestly tries to mitigate the sufferings of the poor in the hour of their distress; but is any notice taken of the millions who are silently succoured by the well-to-do Hindus and Mahomedans out of their own pocket in accordance with the injunctions of their religions? Then, has not the Congress cried for 30 years for the amelioration of the condition of the

masses as persistently as for political rights and privileges? If such be the case, where is the ground and where the evidence for the apprehension so keenly felt and so persistently echoed and re-echoed? The Labour party in the British Parliament is only of yesterday's growth and were Parliamentary institutions deferred till the grant of a nominal representation of its vast working population? And was it Cobden or Keir Hardie that organised the Anti-Corn Law League or improved the wages of the labouring classes of Great Britain? And Cobden did not belong to any labouring class. And then are not caste prejudices fast dying out under the inexorable pressure of our environments and are not men of talent rising out of the ranks of the so-called depressed classes who are receiving the ungrudging homage of the Brahmins and other superior castes? Lastly, would not there always be the paramount authority of the Government to correct abuses and remedy injustice wherever committed? Blood is always thicker than water and people are not therefore wanting amongst us who honestly regard the question of the strong and the weak only as a plausible pretext and not as a serious argument.

HINDU-MOSLEM QUESTION

Another difficulty put forward is the eternal question of the differences between the Hindus and the Mahomedans of India. But the game has been nearly played out, and the Hindus and the Mahomedans have practically solved the question. It is more than five years ago that some of us dreamt a dream which appears now not to have been all a dream. The Congress and the League have come to meet at the same place and the day may not be far distant when, inspite of the Siren song which has so far diverted their course, they will come to meet in the same pavilion and at the same time. The Hindus and Mahomedans are rapidly converging towards each other and indeed it would be a miracle if they did not so converge and if they continued to fly off at a tangent despite the irresistible attraction of the great centripetal force which is drawing them towards their common centre. The stock

argument based upon occasional differences and disturbances between Hindus and Mussalmans cannot have much force. These are confined mostly to lower classes of people on either side. It is neither fair nor judicious to exaggerate their importance. There are Hindus and Mahomedans side by side in every Native State. In the Mahomedan State of Hyderabad with a Hindu population of nearly 70 per. cent. and the Hindu State of Kashmere with 60 per cent. Mahomedan subjects we do not hear of any cow-killing riots or Mohurrum disturbances or of any ill-feeling between the two communities. And one wonders why a different state of things should prevail in British territories. A nationality is now no longer either a religious or a social federation, but a political unit. Diverse races professing different forms of religion and following distinct varieties of manners, customs and traditions easily submit to a common political faith to work out their common destiny. The Picts and the Scots, the Saxons and the Normans, the Protestants and the Catholics are now all welded into the great British Nation. The Teutons and the Slavs, the Prussians and the Poles have formed one of the mightiest empires which has lit up a world-wide conflagration ; while in that curious Dual Monarchy of Austro-Hungary the Magyars, the Hungarians, the Czecks, the Poles, the Slavs, the Serbs, the Croats and the Rumanians have formed themselves into a national federation of no ordinary solidarity and strength. The Hindus and Mussalmans are both of a common Aryan stock, while Hindu anthropology traces them to a common descent within the legendary period of their ancient history. Neither the Parsis nor the Mahomedans of India owe any temporal allegiance either to the Shah of Persia or the Sultan of Turkey. They are now Indians as much as the Hindus. But why indulge in speculations against a settled fact ? I think I break no secret when I announce to you that the Hindu-Moslem question has been settled and the Hindus and Mussalmans have agreed to make a united demand for Self-Government. The All-India Congress Committee and the representatives of the Moslem League who recently met in conference at Calcutta have after two days' deliberations, in one voice

resolved to make a joint demand for a Representative Government in India. There are little differences on one or two minor points of detail, but they count for nothing. The vital issue has been solved and the main point has been gained. The report of the Conference will shortly be placed before you and I need not enter into details. We have many historic days, but I believe the 17th November will rank among the brightest and the most notable of them all. I would now appeal to both the communities to sink all their minor domestic differences and present a solid united front for the realisation of their common destiny within the Empire. Only the seeds having been sown, the seedlings have just sprouted and for God's sake let us not quarrel over the division of the crop which still demands our combined labour and attention before the harvest comes. What are special electorates and communal representations when there is really no electorate and no representation among a people? What matters it if Dinshaw Edulji Wacha or Surendra Nath Banerjee or Muzar-ul-Haque were to represent us in our National Assembly? They are three in one and one in three. We fully remember what the great *Yudhishthira* said addressing the *Kauravas* and the *Pandavas*. Making a different application of the noble saying of the wise and saintly *Yudhishthira* we may say that we may be five brothers on one side and a hundred brothers on the other, but in a common cause we are a hundred and five brothers undivided and indivisible.

Gentlemen, an ounce of fact is said to be worth a ton of theories and while we here are quarrelling over the first principles of the problem, the Americans have quietly and speedily solved it in the Philippines.

THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippine Islands from their discovery by Lopez de Villalobos in the reign of Philip of Spain were under a form of despotic government compared to which the despotism of John Company was an unmixed blessing. The Archipelago is inhabited by a congeries of people speaking different languages and observing different forms of religion of the

most primitive type. The Negritoes, the Negroes, the Panayas, the Mindanos, a dark woolly people, Indonassians, the Malayans, the Chinese, the Spaniards and a number of non-descripts inhabit the islands. Of ancient civilisation and tradition these people have none, while as to their enlightenment and culture the world has heard nothing. The Americans conquered the islands in 1898 and the only claim of the people to the consideration of their liberators was that they had at first formed themselves into a band of insurgents under the leadership of an ambitious man named Aguinaldo who afterwards aspired to expel their benefactors. A Provincial Government was, however, soon established by the Americans and peace restored in the country. Quite recently a proposal was brought forward in the House of Representatives of the United States for the granting of Home Rule to the Philippines and in the discussion which followed some maintained that it should be accomplished in two years, some in four years, while others held that there should be no time limit; but all agreed that the islanders must be given their freedom and the Archipelago should not form a permanent appendage to the United States which, since the Civil War, had positively refused to go in for territorial aggrandisement even in the face of the splendid opportunities which the New World presented to them. The last resolution was carried; and the American Governor, in addressing the Philippinos on the occasion of granting them a substantial majority in the Legislative Assemblies in 1913, said:

> We regard ourselves as trustees, acting not for the advantage of the United States, but for the benefit of the people of the Philippines. Every step we take will be taken with a view to the independence of the islands and as a preparation for that independence. The administration will take one step at once. It will give to the native citizens of the islands a majority in the Commission and thus in the Upper as well as in the Lower House of the Legislature. . . . We place within your reach the instruments of redemption. The door of opportunity stands open, and the event, under Providence, is in your hands. The triumph is as great for us as it is for you.

Noble words these and nobly have the Americans come forward to fulfil them. As a result of this announcement the following measures have been introduced:—

The Central Government in the Philippines is composed of the Governor-General, who is the chief executive and president of the Philippine Commission, and eight Commissioners, three Americans and five Philippinos. The Philippine Commission constitutes the Upper House and the elective Philippine Assembly the Lower House of the Legislative body. The members of the Assembly hold office for four years, and the Legislature elects two Resident Commissioners to the United States, who hold office for the same term. These are members of the United States' House of Representatives with a voice, but not a vote. The islands are divided into 36 provinces, of which 31 are regular and the rest special. The Government of each of the regular provinces is vested in a provincial board composed of a Governor and two *vocals*. The Governor is the chief executive of the province and presiding officer of the board. He and the *vocals of* the board are all elected by popular vote. The Government of towns is practically autonomous, the officials being elected by the qualified voters of the municipalities and serving for four years. The Jones' Bill of Independence introduced in the United States Legislature proposed to confer complete independence on the Philippinos not later than four years from the passing of the Bill. In place of the present Philippine Commission, which is abolished, the Philippinos are to elect a Senate. The House is already elected by the people, and with the election of the Senate, the electorate is to be increased by about 600,000. As about 200,000 Philippinos vote now, the new law will grant voting rights to about 800,000. The office of Governor-General is retained and there is to be a Vice-Governor, an American whose duties are to be fixed by the Governor-General. The functions of the Legislature are limited so as to provide that the coinage, currency and immigration laws shall not be made without the approval of the President of the United States. Finally all Americans residing in the Islands who desire to vote must become citizens of the Islands. The *Republican* points out also that the preamble of the bill fixes no specific date for the granting of independence, but simply states that it has

always been the purpose of the people of the United States to withdraw their sovereignty over the Philippine Islands and to recognise their independence as soon as a suitable government can be established therein. Therefore, as justly pointed out by the *Indian Patriot*:

> enlarged powers of self-government are granted in order that, by the use and exercise of popular franchise and governmental powers, they may the better be prepared fully to assume the responsibilities and enjoy all the privileges of complete independence.

Thus a complete autonomous federal goverment has already been established in the islands, in which the Philippinos largely preponderate over the Americans and in which the actual administration has been substantially transferred to them. There is no bureaucracy in the Philippines, nor a Jingo press there. No, there is no ruler and ruled, no sedition and internments. Self-Government has established a reign of peace and contentment. Every Philippino is now a free citizen unemasculated by the operation of any Arms Act and unfettered by any Press Law. Are the arm-chair critics who so lavishly indulge in abusing the Indian Nationalists for their " extravagant hopes " and "unrealisable demands" prepared to give any explanation of this phenomenal progress of the Philippines under the suzerainty of America? What is the difference between the Union Jack and the Star and the Stripes? Let Sir William Wedderburn, who was as distinguished a member of the Indian Civil Service as his views have always commanded respect for their sobriety, soundness and moderation, answer. Sir William, commenting on the question of Self-Government as viewed on a reference to the Philippines, pertinently asks :—

> Can anybody show valid cause why this good example (of America) should not be followed by the British Government with regard to India? Are the Philippinos in any respect superior to the people of India? Or, is it that the British people are inferior to the Americans in love of principle and moral courage?

We pause for a reply as to which of the alternatives is correct. Sir William then adds :—

The problem in India is much simpler, for India does not ask for a termination of the British connection, but I can say with certainty that among our best friends in India there exists grave disquiet, produced by the silence of the Government regarding their future policy, accompanied by irritating retrogressive legislation in Parliament and fresh activity of police repression in India.

If the Philippinos have developed an instinct for Self-Government within 18 years, no amount of reasoning or argument can satisfy the Indian mind that the Hindus, the Mahomedans, the Parsis and the Christians of India have not made even a near approach to it within 160 years and if they are not yet fit for self-government, I despair of a time when they may be so.

AMENDMENT OF CONSTITUTION

There is yet another question which ought to be clearly understood in connection with our demand for Self-Government. Is it any appreciable increase in our share in the administration that we demand on the permanent basis of the present system of government ? Or is it a thorough change in the constitution irrespective of all considerations of larger employment of the children of the soil in the public services ? To be more explicit, let us put the question in its naked form. Supposing the Public Service Commission, whose report is still a sealed book to the people of this country, have recommended that no less than one-half or even two-thirds of the appointments in the different civil services should be filled up by Indians, but that the present bureaucracy must always continue to be in power, would such a recommendation, even if accepted by the Government, satisfy Indian aspirations ? I know the answer will be in the negative. Such an arrangement will only serve to add a number of Indian bureaucrats without adding a bit to the powers and privileges of the people ; and there would not be much to choose between the present bureaucracy and its proposed substitute. It is the system and not the *personnel* of the administration from which the people suffer. It is the rotten soil that breeds rank weeds. It is only a radical change in the form and constitution of the Government however slow or tentative

in its character, but steady and continuous in its development, that can satisfy the growing spirit of the Indian people and remove their grievances. If the British Parliament were after the War to hold in one hand a very high percentage of the public employments and a small modicum of real Self-Government in the other and to ask India to choose between the two, I am sure, she would unhesitatingly grasp the one and let go the other.

ANARCHY AND REPRESSION

Gentlemen, the new spirit to which I have already referred frankly refuses to believe in the liberalisation of a bureaucratic administration. The spirit is common both to the young and the old with this difference only that, while the old would proceed cautiously and steadily, the young are moved by the enthusiastic ardour natural to their age. If the Congress has so far persistently advanced the claims of the people to a larger share in the various public services, it has done so more from an economic point of view than for the satisfaction of its demands for a national government. Irresponsible critics who denounce the new spirit ought to remember that it is not a sudden and abnormal growth in the Indian mind. It has appeared in Egypt, in Turkey, in Persia and in China and in fact in every country where autocratic rule has prevailed. All these countries have undergone the hammering process and everywhere hammering has served only to beat soft metals into hard ones. Anarchism and lawlessness have, in all these countries, followed in the wake of misrule.

The appearance of anarchism in the land has been a source of the deepest concern to the Government and the people alike. Both are interested in its eradication, alike for the ends of peaceful government and the progressive development of the country on constitutional lines. But we must know what the disease is before we can apply the remedy. Anarchism has its roots deep in economic and political conditions. One asks how is that free countries like England and France or America are free from this taint. There the blessings of freedom, of industrial progress

and of peace and contentment which follow in their train reign over the land. Let those great blessings be ours and anarchism will disappear. It is of Western origin. It is an excrescence which ought to disappear with healing measures calculated to diffuse broadcast the blessings of political contentment and of material prosperity. By all means punish evil-doers and iniquitous breakers of the law who commit wanton assaults on the lives and properties of their fellow-countrymen. But repression is not the true remedy. Repression when unwisely enforced and against the sober sense and judgment of the community must aggravate the situation and strengthen those forces of discontent which are the breeding ground of anarchism. "The sovereign remedy for public distempers," says Burke, "is conciliation and not coercion, for though coercion may succeed for a time it always leaves room for coercing again." A sufficient trial has been given to the orthodox method of the bureaucracy and the Congress urges that the other method should now be tried.

THE ASSURANCES

Gentlemen, we are roundly charged with revelling in "extravagant hopes" and indulging in "unrealisable demands." But we have long refused to profit by the very friendly and eminently practical suggestions of those whose only claim to be regarded as *Statesman* or *Englishman* consists in the proud names which they have like the "bogus medical degrees" assumed for themselves. We do not judge the great British nation by specimens of this kind who do not do honour to the English name. If we had done that the Congress would have long ago wound up its business and gone into voluntary liquidation. The descendants of Howard and Wilberforce, of Burke and Bright, of Macaulay and Maine, and of Canning and Ripon are not yet extinct. It is a nation of giants who refuse to tolerate injustice and perpetuate serfdom wherever they may exist, if only they are satisfied of their existence, and who possess a responsive heart to the call of freedom. It has been truly said that it is not Britain's heart, but Britain's ear, that has been so long deaf to the wail that

has been raised in this country. But the din of war has risen above all and the thrilling demonstrations of India's fidelity to the British connection have disabused many a robust mind in England of the hobgoblin stories to which they have been so lavishly treated in the past: and Liberals and Conservatives have, therefore, with equal emphasis come to recognise as rational what has been denounced as "extravagant hopes" and "unrealisable demands" of the Indian people. Let us recall to-day only a few of the many assurances that have been given to India by some of the responsible ministers and men who are now guiding the destinies of the Empire.

The *Times*, the leading organ of Conservative opinion in England, has been struck with the unexpected demonstration in India and frankly admitted that the Indian problem must be henceforth looked at from a different point of view." On our part," says the great journal, "when we have settled account with the enemy, India must be allowed a more ample place in the councils of the Empire." Both Mr. Montagu and Mr. Roberts, as Under-Secretary for India, have from time to time expressed themselves in no uncertain voice as to the correct lines upon which the Indian administration requires to be revised and modified. Mr. Montagu's honest interpretation of Lord Hardinge's Despatch of August 1911 is well known, while Mr. Roberts speaking from his place in the House of Commons has frankly acknowledged that with the intellectual classes in India, this outburst of loyalty is a "reasoned sentiment based upon considerations of enlightened self-interest, and has at the same time asked the British public to alter "the angle of vision" in their perspective of the Indian problem. Following the *Times*, the *Review of Reviews* has, in one of its latest numbers, fairly admitted that

> India to-day occupies a higher place in the Empire than ever before and has materially advanced her claims towards Self-Government, and it is inevitable that, after the War, her outstanding demands should receive the most sympathetic considerations. We have (the *Review* adds) made promises of Self-Government

to Egypt, and it is inconceivable that we should deny the same privileges to India. At present India is not pressing her claim, but patiently awaits her just due, not as a reward, but as a right which her conduct has shown her worthy of possessing.

Lord Haldane, who till recently occupied a commanding position in the Cabinet, said :—

The Indian soldiers were fighting for the liberties of humanity as much as we ourselves. India had given her lives and treasures in humanity's great cause, hence things could not be left as they were. We had been thrown together in the mighty struggle and had been made to realise our oneness, so producing relations between India and England which did not exist before. Our victory would be victory for the Empire as a whole and could not fail to raise it to a higher level.

Then, at a recent meeting held at Guildhall at the instance of the Lord Mayor, Mr. Asquith, the Premier, and Mr. Bonar Law, the erstwhile leader of the Opposition, and both now united in coalition ministry, have given a joint pledge for the readjustment of India's position in the councils of the Empire after the War is over. But, to quote the words of Mr. Bonar Law, why the thing should not be done " while the metal was still glowing red-hot from the furnace of the war " and the promised rewards of India's comradeship and co-operation should be all relegated to the indefinite future and not one of them even shadowed forth in the present programme of the Imperial Government, seems to be inexplicable. Quite recently Lord Chelmsford is reported to have said that :

The war, by giving India an opportunity to show its practical importance to the Empire, had stirred Indian aspirations for developments politically and economically. It would be his endeavour to secure a practical response to this new desire for progress.

His Lordship is said to have added :

My task is to guard India from cramping influences of undue conservatism equally with unpractical revolutionary tendencies.

Now, are these men of less authority, foresight and responsibility than the members of the Indian bureaucracy or its exponents in the Anglo-Indian Press who are ever so loud and positive in denouncing our claims ? Or, are these assurances all a hoax intended to delude the Indian mind ?

We positively refuse to accept any such view which would be a gross calumny on the great British nation. We have much greater confidence in British statesmanship which may have blundered in many places but has failed nowhere. Gentlemen, we indulge in no gloomy anticipations ; but we shudder to contemplate the serious effect which the non-fulfilment of these pledges is likely to produce in the minds of the Indian public. The Partition of Bengal which was after all a provincial question brought in its trail an outburst of discontent which like wild-fire spread throughout the whole country and necessitated a full brigade of repressive measures to put it down, although its mouldering sparks are not yet fully extinct. And how wide-spread and far-reaching must be the unrest which is sure to follow a light-hearted treatment of these solemn pledges and assurances upon which the people have so firmly and so confidently built their future hopes of advancement ? God forbid that such a calamity should befall India. As loyal subjects of His Majesty, we of the Congress deem it our duty to tell all whom it may concern not to treat the Indian problem after the war as lightly as some irresponsible and mischievous critics are evidently disposed to do. Already a subdued note of the " scrap of paper " has been raised in certain quarters. The Charter Act of 1833, the Queen's Proclamation of 1858 and the two gracious messages of King Edward VII and George V still remain unredeemed, and it would be no wise statesmanship to add to the burden of unredeemed pledges. England has been drawn into the vortex of a titanic struggle for the deliverance of Belgium and Serbia. God grant, she may come out with her brave Allies completely triumphant in her heroic efforts. She has, however, a much greater stake in India, and India has a much greater claim to her consideration. Let us hope she will not fail to be at least as just as she is generous. After the war is over a complete readjustment of the Empire will have to be made ; all its component parts will have to be co-ordinated and harmonised with one another and with the parent state. India alone cannot be left out of this programme. She must be admitted into common and equal partnership with

the colonies on terms of equal rights and obligations of the Empire, enjoying equal laws and equal rights of British citizenship throughout that Empire. The collar of a dependency should be removed from her neck and the coronet of an autonomous, self-governing state placed upon her head. What a glorious federation it would then be, more glorious than that of the Roman Empire or of any that the world has yet seen. England would do well to remember in her own interest that she cannot maintain a condition of perpetual pupilage anywhere within her world-wide possessions without slowly and imperceptibly innoculating herself with its poison in her own home. Demoralisation in one part of a body however remote must inevitably result, if not remedied, in the ultimate deterioration of the whole system. Present experience has shown that for greater cohesion and solidarity of the Empire its component parts must be brought into closer touch and more intimate relations between one another and the mother country. India alone cannot be excluded from equal consideration in the coming readjustment, for if she were to be so excluded India's position is sure to be worse than even at present. If the colonies are allowed a representation in the federal council of the Empire, they will undoubtedly have a voice in the administration of India and for aught we know, their representative may sometimes find a place in the cabinet and also become the Secretary of State for India. If India is denied such representation she will be further degraded as being subject also to the colonies. There is a serious danger in admitting the colonies to a participation in determining the policy that is to be followed in relation to India, for the colonial mind is saturated with the colour prejudice which would thus be reflected in the Government of India. Such a change in the "angle of vision" would be dreadful to contemplate. If the equilibrium of the Empire is to be maintained, India must also be thrown into the scale. She must be freely admitted into the partnership and given a free constitution like that of the self-governing dominions and a fair representation in the federal council along with the colonies.

OUR DEMANDS

Ladies and Gentlemen, I now propose as a summary to the foregoing discussions to submit a few "daring and impertinent" proposals for the consideration of the Government both in England as well as in India. A memorandum presented by nineteen members of the Supreme Legislative Council has met with the criticisms of both sides. Some have regarded it as premature and falling short of our demands, while others have denounced it as extravagant. The circumstances which brought about the submission of this memorandum have already been explained to the public; while, as I read it, this memorandum represents neither the irreducible minimum nor the unenhancible maximum of our demands; nor do I understand the signatories to it to mean that their proposals are to be carried out on the morning following the day on which the Treaty of Berlin may be signed. The signatories to the memorandum have, however, done me one great service. They have borne the brunt of the fusilade and made my passage less difficult, so as to enable me to press forward unnoticed under cover of their fire. As to the other side of the shield, our misfortune is that we are unable to see where the extravagance comes in. We have no superfluities in any direction and for such a people as ourselves to indulge in extravagance seems to be out of the question. Extravagance may seize the minds of those who have got enough and to spare. However that may be, here are our demands which God willing are bound to be fulfilled at no distant date.

1. India must cease to be a dependency and be raised to the status of a self-governing state as an equal partner with equal rights and responsibilities as an independent unit of the Empire.

2. In any scheme of readjustment after the war, India should have a fair representation in the Federal Council like the Colonies of the Empire.

3. India must be governed from Delhi and Simla, and not from Whitehall or Downing Street. The Council

of the Secretary of State should be either abolished or its constitution so modified as to admit of substantial Indian representation on it. Of the two Under-Secretaries of State for India, one should be an Indian and the salaries of the Secretary of State should be placed on the British estimates as in the case of the Secretary for the Colonies. The Secretary of State for India should, however, have no more powers over the Government of India than those exercised by the Secretary for the Colonies in the case of the Dominions. India must have complete autonomy, financial, legislative as well as administrative.

4. The Government of India is the most vital point in the proposed reforms. It is the fountain-head of all the local administrations and unless we can ensure its progressive character, any effective reform of the local governments would be impossible. For this the Services should be completely separated from the State, and no member of any service should be a member of the Government. The knowledge and experience of competent members of a service may be utilised in the departments, but they should not be allowed to be members of the Executive Council or the Cabinet of the Government itself.

5. The Executive Government of India should vest in the Governor-General with a number of ministers not less than one half of whom should be Indians elected by the elected non-official Indian members of the Supreme Legislative Council. These members should hold office for five years. Thus this ministry of the Viceroy will possess the composite character of a parliamentary and non-parliamentary cabinet.

6. The Upper House of Representatives in Canada is composed of 90 members. The Supreme Legislative Council in India should consist of at least 150 members. These members should be all elected. But for the transitory period, one-fifth may be appointed by the Cabinet, not more than one-fourth of whom may be officials.

7. The Annual Budget should be introduced into the Legislative Council like money bills, and except the

military estimates, the entire Budget should be subject to the vote of the Council.

8. The Provincial Governments should be perfectly autonomous, each Province developing and enjoying its own resources, subject only to a contribution towards the maintenance of the Supreme Government.

9. A Provincial administration should be vested, as in the case of the Supreme Government, in a Governor with a cabinet not less than one-half of whom should be Indians elected by the non-official elected Indian members of its Legislative Council.

10. The Provincial Legislative Council should, in the case of a major province, consist of 100 members and in the case of a minor province 75 members, all of whom should be elected by the people and each district must have at least one representative of its own. For the transitory period there should of course be the same conditions and restrictions as in the case of the Supreme Legislative Council.

11. As the executive and the legislative functions are to be separated, so there must be complete separation of the judicial from the executive functions of the State. The judicial administration, whether civil or criminal, should be wholly vested in the High Courts both as regards control as well as the pay, prospect and promotion of its officers. The High Courts should be subordinate only to the Supreme Government.

12. The Arms Act should be repealed or so modified as to place the Indians exactly on the same footing with the Europeans and Eurasians. The Press Act should be removed from the Statute Book and all the repressive measures withdrawn.

13. India should have a national militia to which all the races should be eligible under proper safeguards and they should be allowed to volunteer themselves under such conditions as may be found necessary for the maintenance of efficiency and discipline. The Commissioned

ranks in the army should be thrown open to His Majesty's Indian subjects.

14. A full measure of local self-government should be immediately granted throughout the country, and the corporations of the Presidency towns, the District and the Taluk boards and the district municipal corporations should be made perfectly self-governing bodies with elected members and elected chairmen of their own. They should be freed from all official control except such as may be legally exercised by the Government direct.

15. Mass education should be made free and compulsory. Suitable provision should also be made for the development and encouragement of indigenous industries.

The above is a summary of our demands. We do not fix any time limit, for the duration of the war is uncertain and there must be a transitory period through which the process must pass. But if we fix no time-limit, we agree to no indefinite postponement either. Some of these proposals can and ought to be immediately carried out and there is no reason why they should wait for the termination of the war ; while there are others which cannot of course be settled until the time for the readjustment of the Empire arrives ; but we must be distinctly understood to maintain that this period should not be treated as a further extension granted to the present system of administration and its methods. There must be henceforth a distinct tendency visible in every branch of the administration to conciliate the people and inspire trust and confidence in the future policy of the Government. As words without thoughts never to heaven go, so promises without performance and sympathy without action can never touch the hearts of a people. Patience has often been prescribed as the sovereign remedy for all distempers ; but it cannot be denied that when the most skilful physician is unable for a long time to show any sign of improvement and on the contrary there are continued symptoms of aggravation, a suspicion naturally may arise in the mind of the patient

as to the skill of the physician or the efficacy of his methods. On our part, gentlemen, we must be content to ascend

STEP BY STEP.

It is no argument to say that you have long acquired the capacity to make the ascent. You might have ten years before safely tried the experiment ; but it does not follow that you can, therefore, cover ten steps or even two steps at a time. Whenever you have to ascend you must begin from the base and rise steadily and cautiously upwards. Of course it would be no progress if you gain one step and lose two. Doubtless we ought carefully to see that we lose no ground and then even if our progress be slow we may be sure of reaching our destined goal.

THE BRITISH COMMITTEE

Gentlemen, one word about our British agency in London. It is perfectly superfluous for me to point out that no business concern can be successfully carried on without a well-equipped and efficient agency at its principal place of business. In England is the real seat of power and the battle of India must be fought on the British soil. Though it is we who must fight it out, we must have the British public as our ally. That public must be informed and influenced so as to enable it to come to a correct judgment of our case. There is an erroneous impression in certain quarters that as our grievances are so numerous and so palpable they must be known to the British people also. But who is there to carry your message to England? You certainly cannot expect *Reuter* to do it. You certainly do not believe that retired Anglo-Indians will proclaim their own defects and shortcomings. On the contrary there are the standing official reports always to present a roseate view of the administration, taking credit for whatever is good, throwing the entire blame for all that is bad on your shoulders and justifying all sorts of repressive measures. The British public in their ignorance easily swallow all these *ex parte* cock-and-bull stories and consider the Indian administration to be a perfect Utopia.

So you must have a counsel of your own to represent your case before the great tribunal of public opinion in Great Britain if you do not wish judgment to go against you by default. Sir William Wedderburn is performing this function at no small sacrifice to himself. India cannot repay the deep debt which she owes to him and his colleagues on the British Committee, and the poet's words are her only satisfaction that a grateful mind by owing owes not, but always remains indebted and discharged. Mr. H. E. A. Cotton, the worthy son of a worthy father, following in the footsteps of his illustrious parent, has been doing yeoman service to India. The British Committee and its sole organ *India* must be maintained at all costs if we are to carry on our operations at the vital front. It has always seemed to me of the utmost importance to associate with the British Committee at least one competent Indian permanently located in England. The great services rendered there some years back by the late Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee and recently by our distinguished countryman Sir Krishna Govinda Gupta ought to be an object-lesson to us. But for all these a permanent Congress Fund is an imperative necessity. The granting of small doles by the Congress every year which are always larger in their arrears than in their payments and the undignified spectacle of one of the leaders every year extending his beggarly Brahmanical hand for such pittance is not the way of practical men engaged in practical business. There is no dearth of men who are rolling in the superfluities of their unearned heritages. Large sums of money are still spent throughout the country in mere shows and ceremonies of the most temporary interest; and if we cannot even raise so much as twice a couple of lakhs of rupees for the uplifting of the nation, then are we rightly treated by our rulers as an inferior race and twitted by our critics as mere men of words indulging in "extravagant hopes" and "unrealisable demands."

CONCLUSION

Ladies and gentlemen, I am afraid I have exhausted your patience although I have failed to exhaust my theme.

My last words are to those bright young faces whom I see before me. My dear young friends and countrymen, you are our hostages to posterity. Every generation has a perpteual devolution and succession of rights and responsibilities: The acquisition of one generation becomes the heritage of the next, and it is the duty of each generation not only to enjoy what it receives from its predecessor, but also to transmit its heritage consolidated, augmented and improved to the one coming after it. Many of those who preceded you in this national struggle have been gathered to their fathers, while those who are still in the field belong to a fast vanishing generation. You ought now to press forward to take their place and hold aloft the banner which is drooping from their sinking hand. Like the mother of the Grachii India, poor India, shorn of her pristine grandeur and glory, has only to boast of *you* as her "precious jewels." Remember of what great nation you are born. It was for you that in the early morning of the world the *Vedas* were revealed and in a later period democratic Islam came with the *Koran* and the practical Parsi with the *Zend Avesta*. Yours is the heritage of three of the most ancient civilisations of the world which have formed as it were a glorious confluence of three streams in this sacred land of yours; while to these in the dispensation of an inscrutable Providence, a fourth has recently been added to constitute a *Sagara-Sangama* for the deliverance of your race. It was for you that *Vyasa* wrote and *Valmiki* sung, and it was for you that *Patanjali* evolved the loftiest of philosophies and the *Geeta* expounded the sublime mysteries of life. It was here that more than two thousand years ago *Buddha Gautama*, the truest and greatest benefactor of mankind, first taught the doctrine of universal brotherhood of men, which now sways the minds of one-fifth of the population of this habitable globe; and it was here that five hundred years ago *Sree Chaitanya* preached the gospel of love, fraternity and equality from the banks of the Ganges to the banks of the Narbudda; and now modern civilisation is prostituting science, filling the air, land and water with deadly engines for the destruction of God's

creation. But let us not be great only in the worship of a great past. A mighty wave of changes is surging throughout this world and India is passing through a momentous transition. Her future is in your hands. You can either make or mar that future. If I were asked, what was the first demand of the Motherland upon her children at this juncture, I would unhesitatingly answer that it is Patriotism. And the second?—Patriotism. And the third?—Patriotism. I do not mean that morbid sentiment which rises like a rocket and falls like a stone; not that sentiment which takes a man off his feet and lands him in disasters; not that sentiment which panders to passion and does not appeal to reason; but I mean that supreme virtue which enlightens the head and ennobles the heart, and under the heavenly inspiration of which a man forgets his self and merges his individuality, like a drop in an ocean, in the vast, all-absorbing interest of his country, feeding only on self-sacrifice and ever growing on what it feeds. To the Indian Nationalists their country must be their religion "taught by no priests but by the beating hearts" and *her* welfare their commom faith "which makes the many one." Hushed be the whispers of jealousy and spite and silenced by the discordant notes of rancorous dissensions amongst you. Sink all your differences in a supreme common cause. Unite and stand solidly shoulder to shoulder resolved either to conquer or to die. Or, what is life worth if we cannot live like men? Firm and resolute in your purpose, be always manly and dignified in your attitude and sober and cautious in your steps. Be loyal to your king and devoted to your country. Difficult as your task is, constitutional must be your method. There is no royal road to freedom. Reverses there must be, but reverses should only stiffen your backs. Do not despair, for despair is the keynote of failure. The pendulum may be swinging forward and backward; but look up and see the hand of invisible Time is perpetually marking its progress on the dial of the destiny of your country. Above all, remember that nations are not born but made. They must grow from within but cannot be made to grow from without. You must stand on your own legs and be prepared to fight

it out with heart within and God overhead. *Dieu-et-Mon-Droit* is the motto emblazoned on the British Coat of Arms and as citizens of the British Empire 'God and my Right' ought to be your watchword and battlecry in the bloodless revolution which is taking place in this country. Be ambitious but not proud; be humble but aspire to a nobler, manlier and healthier life. What have you to boast of but your vanished glories! You are Uitlanders in your own country. In the burning words of the Father of the Congress—

> What avail your wealth, your learning,
> Empty titles, sordid trade?
> True Self-rule were worth them all!
> Nations by themselves are made.

BANDE MATARAM.

Thirty-Second Congress—Calcutta—1917.

Mrs. ANNIE BESANT

FELLOW-Delegates and Friends,—Everyone who has preceded me in the Chair has rendered his thanks in fitting terms for the gift which is truly said to be the highest that India has it in her power to bestow. It is the sign, of her fullest love, trust and approval, and the one whom she seats in that chair is, for his year of service, her chosen leader. But if my predecessors found fitting words for their gratitude, in what words can I voice mine, whose debt to you is so overwhelmingly greater than theirs? For the first time in Congress history, you have chosen as your President one who, when your choice was made, was under the heavy ban of Government displeasure, and who lay interned as a person dangerous to public safety. While I was humiliated, you crowned me with honour; while I was slandered, you believed in my integrity and good faith; while I was crushed under the heel of bureaucratic power, you acclaimed me as your leader; while I was silenced and unable to defend myself, you defended me, and won for me release. I was proud to serve in lowliest fashion, but you lifted me up and placed me before the world as your chosen representative. I have no words with which to thank you, no eloquence with which to repay my debt. My deeds must speak for me, for words are too poor. I turn your gift into service to the Motherland; I consecrate my life anew to her in worship by action. All that I have and am, I lay on the Altar of the Mother, and together we shall cry more by service than by words. —*Vande Mataram.*

There is, perhaps, one value in your election of me in this crisis of India's destiny, seeing that I have not

the privilege to be Indian-born, but come from that little island in the northern seas which has been, in the West, the builder-up of free institutions. The Aryan emigrants, who spread over the lands of Europe, carried with them the seeds of liberty sown in their blood in their Asian cradle-land. Western historians trace the self-rule of the Saxon villages to their earlier prototypes in the East, and see the growth of English liberty as up-springing from the Aryan root of the free and self-contained village communities.

Its growth was crippled by Norman feudalism there as its millennia-nourished security here was smothered by the East India Company. But in England it burst its shackles and nurtured a liberty-loving people, and a free Commons' House. Here, it similarly burgeoned out into the Congress activities, and more recently into those of the Muslim League, now together blossoming into Home Rule for India. The England of Milton, Cromwell, Sydney, Burke, Paine, Shelley, Wilberforce, Gladstone; the England that sheltered Mazzini, Kossuth, Kropotkin; Stepniak, and that welcomed Garibaldi; the England that is the enemy of tyranny, the foe of autocracy, the lover of freedom, that is the England I would fain here represent to you to-day. To-day when India stands erect, no suppliant people, but a Nation, self-conscious, self-respecting, determined to be free; when she stretches out her hand to Britain and offers friendship not subservience, co-operation not obedience; to-day let me, western-born but in spirit eastern, cradled in England but Indian by choice and adoption, let me stand as the symbol of union between Great Britain and India, a union of hearts and free choice, not of compulsion, and therefore of a tie which cannot be broken, a tie of love and of mutual helpfulness, beneficial to both Nations and blessed by God.

GONE TO THE PEACE

India's great leader, Dadabhai Naoroji, has left his mortal body and is now one of the company of the

Immortals, who watch over and aid India's progress. He is with W. C. Bonnerjee, and Ranade, and A. O. Hume, and Henry Cotton, and Pherozeshah Mehta, and Gopal Krishna Gokhale—the great men who, in Swinburne's noble verse, are the stars which lead us to Liberty's altar:

> These, O men, shall ye honour,
> Liberty only and these.
>
> For thy sake and for all men's and mine,
> Brother, the crowns of them shine,
> Lighting the way to her shrine,
> That our eyes may be fastened upon her,
>
> That our hands may encompass her knees.

Not for me to praise him in feeble words of reverence and of homage. His deeds praise him, and his service to his country is his abiding glory. Our gratitude will be best paid by following in his footsteps alike in his splendid courage and his unfaltering devotion, so that we may win the Home Rule which he longed to see while with us, and shall see, ere long, from the other world of Life, in which he dwells to-day.

THE WAR AND PRE-WAR MILITARY EXPENDITURE

The Great War, into the whirlpool of which Nation after Nation has been drawn, has entered on its fourth year. The rigid censorship which has been established makes it impossible for any outside the circle of Governments to forecast its duration, but to me, speaking for a moment not as a politician but as a student of spiritual laws, to me its end is sure. For the true object of this War is to prove the evil of, and to destroy, autocracy and the enslavement of one Nation by another, and to place on sure foundations the God-given Right to Self-Rule and Self-Development of every Nation, and the similar right of the Individual, of the smaller Self, so far as is consistent with the welfare of the larger Self of the Nation. The forces which make for the prolongation of autocracy—the rule of one—and the even deadlier bureaucracy—the rule of a close body welded into an iron system—these have been gathered

together in the Central Powers of Europe—as of old in Ravana—in order that they may be destroyed; for the New Age cannot be opened until the Old passes away. The new civilisation of Righteousness and Justice, and therefore of Brotherhood, of ordered Liberty, of Peace, of Happiness, cannot be built up until the elements are removed which have brought the old civilisation crashing about our ears. Therefore is it necessary that the War shall be fought out to its appointed end, and that no premature peace shall leave its object unattained. Autocracy and bureaucracy must perish utterly, in East and West, and, in order that their germs may not re-sprout in the future, they must be discredited in the minds of men. They must be proved to be less efficient than the Governments of Free Peoples, even in their favourite game of War, and their iron machinery—which at first brings outer prosperity and success—must be shown to be less lasting and effective than the living and flexible organisations of democratic Peoples. They must be proved failures before the world, so that the glamour of superficial successes may be destroyed for ever. They have had their day and their place in evolution, and have done their educative work. Now they are out-of-date, unfit for survival, and must vanish away.

When Great Britain sprang to arms, it was in defence of the freedom of a small Nation, guaranteed by treaties, and the great principles she proclaimed electrified India and the Dominions. They all sprang to her side without question, without delay; they heard the voice of old England, the soldier of Liberty, and it thrilled their hearts. All were unprepared, save the small territorial army of Great Britain, due to the genius and foresight of Lord Haldane, and the readily mobilised army of India, hurled into the fray by the swift decision of Lord Hardinge. The little army of Britain fought for time, fought to stop the road to Paris, the heart of France, fought, falling back step by step, and gained

the time it fought for, till India's sons stood on the soil of France, were flung to the front, rushed past the exhausted regiments who cheered them with failing breath, charged the advancing hosts, stopped the retreat, and joined the British army in forming that unbreakable line which wrestled to the death through two fearful winters —often, these soldiers of the tropics, waist-deep in freezing mud—and knew no surrender.

India, with her clear vision, saw in Great Britain the champion of Freedom, in Germany the champion of despotism. And she saw rightly. Rightly she stood by Great Britain, despite her own lack of freedom and the coercive legislation which outrivalled German despotism, knowing these to be temporary, because un-English, and therefore doomed to destruction; she spurned the lure of German gold and rejected German appeals to revolt. She offered men and money; her educated classes, her Vakils, offered themselves as Volunteers, pleaded to be accepted. Then the never sleeping distrust of Anglo-India rejected the offer, pressed for money, rejected men. And, slowly, educated India sank back, depressed and disheartened, and a splendid opportunity for knitting together the two Nations was lost.

Early in the War, I ventured to say that the War could not end until England recognised that autocracy and bureaucracy must perish in India as well as in Europe. The good Bishop of Calcutta, with a courage worthy of his free race, lately declared that it would be hypocritical to pray for victory over autocracy in Europe and to maintain it in India. Now, it has been clearly and definitely declared that Self-Government is to be the objective of Great Britain in India, and that a substantial measure of it is to be given at once; when this promise is made good by the granting of the Reforms outlined last year in Lucknow, then the end

of the war will be in sight. For the war cannot end till the death-knell of autocracy is sounded.

Causes, with which I will deal presently and for which India was not responsible, have somewhat obscured the first eager expressions of India's sympathy, and have forced her thoughts largely towards her own position in the Empire. But that does not detract from the immense aid she has given and is still giving. It must not be forgotten that long before the present War, she had submitted—at first while she had no power of remonstrance, and later, after 1885, despite the constant protests of Congress—to an ever-rising military expenditure, due partly to the amalgamation scheme of 1859, and partly to the cost of various wars beyond her frontiers, and to continually recurring frontier and trans-frontier expeditions, in which she had no real interest. They were sent out for supposed Imperial advantages, not for her own.

Between 1859 and 1904—45 years—Indian troops were engaged in thirty-seven wars and expeditions. There were ten wars: the two Chinese Wars of 1860 and 1900, the Bhutan War of 1864-65, the Abyssinian War of 1868, the Afghan War of 1878-79, and, after the massacre of the Kabul Mission, the second War of 1879-80, ending in an advance of the frontier, in the search for an ever receding "scientific frontier"; on this occasion the frontier was shifted, says Keene, "from the line of the Indus to the western slope of the Suleiman range and from Peshawar to Quetta"; the Egyptian War of 1882, in which the Indian troops markedly distinguished themselves; the third Burmese War of 1885 ending in the annexation of Upper Burma in 1886; the invasions of Tibet in 1890 and 1904. Of Expeditions, or minor Wars, there were 27; to Sitana in 1858 on a small scale and in 1863 on a larger (the "Sitana Campaign"); to Nepal and Sikkim in 1859; to Sikkim in 1864; a serious struggle on the North-West Frontier in 1868; expeditions against the Lushais in 1871-72, the Daflas in 1874-75, the Nagas in 1875, the Afridis in 1877

the Rampa Hill tribes in 1879, the Waziris and Nagas in 1881, the Akhas in 1884, and in the same year an expedition to the Zhob Valley, and a second thither in 1890. In 1888 and 1889, there was another expedition against Sikkim, against the Akozais (the Black Mountain expedition) and against the Hill Tribes of the North-East, and in 1890 another Black Mountain expedition, with a third in 1892. In 1890 came the expedition to Manipur, and in 1891, there was another expedition against the Lushais, and one into the Miranzal Valley. The Chitral expedition occupied 1894-95, and the serious Tirah campaign, in which 40,000 men were engaged, came in 1897 and 1898. The long list—which I have closed with 1904—ends with the expeditions against the Mahsuds in 1901, against the Kabalis in 1902, and the invasion of Tibet, before noted. All these events explain the rise in military expenditure, and we must add to them the sending of Indian troops to Malta and Cyprus in 1878—a somewhat theatrical demonstration—and the expenditure of some £2,000,000 to face what was described as "the Russian Menace" in 1884. Most of these were due to Imperial, not to Indian policy, and many of the burdens imposed were protested against by the Government of India while others were encouraged by ambitious Viceroys. I do not think that even this long list is complete.

Ever since the Government of India was taken over by the Crown, India has been regarded as an Imperial military asset and training ground, a position from which the jealousy of the East India Company had largely protected her by insisting the army it supported should be used for the defence and in the interests of India alone. Her value to the Empire for military purposes would not so seriously have injured at once her pride and her finances, if the natural tendencies of her martial races had been permitted their previous scope; but the disarming of the people, 20 years after the assumption of the Government by the Crown, emasculated the Nation, and the elimination

of races supposed to be unwarlike, or in some cases too warlike to be trusted, threw recruitment more and more to the north, and lowered the physique of the Bengalis and Madrasis on whom the Company had largely depended.

The superiority of the Punjab, on which Sir Michael O'Dwyer so vehemently insisted the other day, is an artificial superiority, created by the British system and policy; and the poor recruitment elsewhere, on which he laid offensive insistence, is due to the same system and policy, which largely eliminated Bengalis, Madrasis and Maharattas from the army. In Bengal, however, the martial type has been revived, chiefly in consequence of what the Bengalis felt to be the intolerable insult of the high-handed partition of Bengal by Lord Curzon. On this, Gopal Krishna Gokhale said:—

> Bengal's heroic stand against the oppression of a harsh and uncontrolled bureaucracy has astonished and gratified all India. . . . All India owes a deep debt of gratitude to Bengal.

The spirit evoked showed itself in the youth of Bengal by a practical revolt, led by the elders while it was confined to Swadeshi and Boycott, and rushing on, when it broke away from their authority, into conspiracy, assassination and dacoity as had happened in similar revolts with Young Italy in the days of Mazzini, and with Young Russia in the days of Stepniak and Kropatkin. The results of the despair, necessarily met by the halter and penal servitude, had to be faced by Lord Hardinge and Lord Carmichael during the present War. Other results, happy instead of disastrous in their nature, were the development of grit and endurance of a high character, shewn in the courage of the Bengal lads in the serious floods that have laid parts of the Province deep under water and in their compassion and self-sacrifice in the relief of famine. Their services in the present War—the Ambulance Corps and the replacement of its *material* when the ship carrying it sank, with the splendid services rendered by it in Mesopotamia; the recruiting of a Bengali regiment for active service, 900 strong, with another 900 reserves to replace

wastage, and recruiting still going on—these are instances of the divine alchemy which brings the soul of good out of evil action, and consecrates to service the qualities evoked by rebellion.

In England also, a similar result has been seen in a convict, released to go to the front, winning the Victoria Cross. It would be an act of statesmanship, as well as of divinest compassion, to offer to every prisoner and interned captive, held for political crime or on political suspicion, the opportunity of serving the Empire at the front. They might, if thought necessary, form a separate battalion or a separate regiment, under stricter supervision, and yet be given a chance of redeeming their reputation, for they are mostly very young.

The financial burden incurred in consequence of the above conflicts, and of other causes, now to be mentioned, would not have been so much resented, if it had been imposed by India on herself, and if her own sons had profitted by her being used as a training ground for the Empire. But in this case, as in so many others, she has shared Imperial burdens, while not sharing Imperial freedom and power. Apart from this, the change which made the Army so ruinous a burden on the resources of the country was the system of "British reliefs," the using of India as a training ground for British regiments, and the transfer of the men thus trained, to be replaced by new ones under the short service system, the cost of the frequent transfers and their connected expenses being charged on the Indian revenues, while the whole advantage was reaped by Great Britain. On the short service system, the Simla Army Commission declared:

> The short service system recently introduced into the British army has increased the cost and has materially reduced the efficiency of the British troops in India. We cannot resist the feeling that, in the introduction of this system, the interest of the Indian tax-payer was entirely left out of consideration.

The remark was certainly justified, for the short service system gave India only five years of the recruits she paid heavily for and trained, all the rest of the benefit

going to England. The latter was enabled, as the years went on, to enormously increase her Reserves, so that she has had 400,000 men trained in, and at the cost of India.

In 1863, the Indian army consisted of 140,000 men, with 65,300 white officers. Great changes were made in 1885-1905, including the reorganisation under Lord Kitchener, who became Commander-in-Chief at the end of 1902. Even in this hasty review, I must not omit reference to the fact that Army Stores were drawn from Britain at enormous cost, while they should have been chiefly manufactured here, so that India might have profited by the expenditure. Lately under the necessities of War, factories have been turned to the production of munitions; but this should have been done long ago, so that India might have been enriched instead of exploited. The War has forced an investigation into her mineral resources, that might have been made for her own sake, but Germany was allowed to monopolise the supply of minerals that India could have produced and worked up, and would have produced and worked up had she enjoyed Home Rule. India would have been richer, and the Empire safer, had she been a partner instead of a possession. But this side of the question will come under the matters directly affecting merchants, and we may venture to express a hope that the Government help, extended to munition factories in time of War, may be continued to industrial factories in time of Peace. The net result of the various causes above mentioned was that the expense of the Indian army rose by leaps and bounds, until, before the War, India was expending £21,000,000 as against the £28,000,000, expended by the United Kingdom, while the wealthy Dominions of Canada and Australia were spending only 1½ and 1¼ millions respectively. (I am not forgetting that the United Kingdom was expending over £51,000,000 on her Navy, while India was free of that burden, save for a contribution of half a million.)

Since 1885, the Congress has constantly protested against the ever-increasing military expenditure, but the voice of the Congress was supposed to be the voice of

sedition and of class ambition, instead of being, as it was, the voice of educated Indians, the most truly patriotic and loyal class of the population. In 1885, in the First Congress, Mr. P. Rangiah Naidu pointed out that military expenditure had been £11,463,000 in 1857 and had risen to £16,975,750 in 1884. Mr. D. E. Wacha ascribed the growth to the amalgamation scheme of 1859, and remarked that the Company in 1856 had an army of 254,000 men at a cost of 11½ millions, while in 1884, the Crown had an army of only 181,000 men at a cost of 17 millions. The rise was largely due to the increased cost of the European regiments, overland transport service, stores, pensions, furlough allowances, and the like, most of them imposed against the resistance of the Government of India, which complained that the charges were " made entirely, it may be said, from Imperial considerations, in which Indian interests have not been consulted or advanced ". India paid nearly £700,000 a year, for instance, for " Home Depots "—Home being England of course—in which lived some 20,000 to 22,000 British soldiers, on the plea that their regiments, not they, were serving in India. I cannot follow out the many increases cited by Mr. Wacha, but members can refer to his excellent speech.

Mr. Fawcett once remarked that when the East India Company was abolished,

> the English people became directly responsible for the Government of India. It cannot, I think, be denied that this responsibility has been so imperfectly discharged that in many respects the new system of Government compares unfavourably with the old. . . . There was at that time an independent control of expenditure which now seems to be almost entirely wanting.

Shortly after the Crown assumed the rule of India, Mr. Disraeli asked the House of Commons to regard India as " a great and solemn trust committed to it by an all-wise and inscrutable Providence." Mr. George Yule, in the Fourth Congress, remarked on this : " The 650 odd members had thrown the trust back upon the hands of Providence, to be looked after as Providence itself thinks best." Perhaps it is time that India

should remember that Providence helps those who help themselves.

Year after year the Congress continued to remonstrate against the cost of the army, until in 1902, after all the futile protests of the intervening years, it condemned an increase of pay to British soldiers in India which placed an additional burden on the Indian revenues of £786,000 a year, and pointed out that the British garrison was unnecessarily numerous, as was shown by the withdrawal of large bodies of British soldiers for services in South Africa and China. The very next year Congress protested that the increasing military expenditure was not to secure India against the internal disorder or external attack, but in order to carry out an Imperial policy; the Colonies contributed little or nothing to the Imperial Military Expenditure, while India bore the cost of about one-third of the whole British Army in addition to her own Indian troops. Surely these facts should be remembered when India's military services to the Empire are now being weighed.

In 1904 and 1905, the Congress declared that the then military expenditure was beyond India's power to bear, and in the latter year prayed that the additional ten millions sterling, sanctioned for Lord Kitchener's reorganisation scheme, might be devoted to education and the reduction of the burden on the raiyats. In 1908, the burdens imposed by the British War Office since 1859 were condemned, and in the next year it was pointed out that the military expenditure was nearly a third of the the whole Indian revenue, and was starving Education and Sanitation.

Lord Kitchener's reorganisation scheme kept the Indian Army on a War footing, ready for immediate mobilisation, and on January 1, 1915, the regular army consisted of 247,000 men of whom 75,000 were English; it was the money spent by India in maintaining this army for years in readiness for War, which made it possible for her to go to the help of Great Britain at the critical early

period to which I alluded. She spent over £20 millions on the military services in 1914-15. In 1915-16 she spent £21·8 millions. In 1916-17, her military budget had risen to £22 millions, and it will be largely exceeded.

On this excess, the Viceroy has spoken very ominously. For the Indian War Loan (excluding Treasury Bills received in England) no less than £32 millions sterling have been received and more is coming in. The proceeds of the Loan go to the British Government in London, as part of India's special contribution of £100 millions. They have been utilised to meet War expenditure in India and Mesopotamia on behalf of the British Government. But the Governor-General says:

> This War expenditure will greatly exceed the amount allowed for the budget estimates, which were based on the best data then available, and we now expect that the excess will practically swallow up the whole of the amounts so far received on account of the Indian War Loan, over and above the £10 millions assumed in the estimate for budget purposes. . . . India is the financial pivot of the British Empire in the East. Thus, apart from the expenditure in India and Mesopotamia to which I have just referred, she is also undertaking the financing of large quantities of wheat, jute, manufactures, hides and numerous other essential commodities, which she is supplying to Great Britain, to the Dominions and to the Allied Governments. She is also providing funds on a considerable scale to East Africa and Persia, and has had on various occasions to assist Ceylon, Mauritius and Egypt by remittance of specie and otherwise; of course we receive repayment for these services, but *as it is not made in India they necessarily constitute a continuing tax on our present resources here* (italics are mine).

The taxes levied to meet the calculated deficit will by no means suffice to fill up the great gulf now yawning before us. On whom will those taxes be levied? It is not unlikely that those Zamindars who have been allying themselves with officials and English non-officials against their countrymen, may find themselves disappointed in their allies, and may begin to realise by personal experiences the necessity of giving to Indian legislatures, in which they will be fully represented, control over national expenditure.

Lord Hardinge, the last Viceroy of India, who is ever held in loving memory here for his sympathetic attitude towards Indian aspirations, made a masterly exposition of India's War services in the House of Lords on the third of last July. He emphasised her pre-War services, shewing that though 19¼ millions sterling was fixed as a maximum by the Nicholson Committee, that amount had been exceeded in 11 out of the last 13 budgets, while his own last budget had risen to 22 millions. During these 13 years the revenue had been only between 48 and 58 millions, once rising to 60 millions. Could any fact speak more eloquently of India's War services than this proportion of military expenditure compared with her revenue?

The Great War began on August 4th, and in that very month and in the early part of September, India sent an expeditionary force of three divisions —two in infantry and one cavalry—and another cavalry division joined them in France in November. The first arrived, said Lord Hardinge, "in time to fill a gap that could not otherwise have been filled." He added pathetically: "There are very few survivors of those two splendid divisions of infantry." Truly, their homes are empty, but their sons shall enjoy in India the liberty for which their fathers died in France. Three more divisions were at once sent to guard the Indian frontier, while in September a mixed division was sent to East Africa, and in October and November two more divisions and a brigade of cavalry went to Egypt. A battalion of Indian infantry went to Mauritius, another to the Cameroons, and two to the Persian Gulf, while other Indian troops helped the Japanese in the capture of Tsingtau. 210,000 Indians were thus sent overseas. The whole of these troops were fully armed and equipped, and in addition, during the first few weeks of the War, India sent to England from her magazines "70 million rounds of small-arm ammunition; 60,000 rifles, and more than 550 guns of the latest pattern and type."

In addition to these, Lord Hardinge speaks of sending to England

> enormous quantities of *material* . . . tents, boots, saddlery, clothing, etc, but every effort was made to meet the ever-increasing demands made by the War Office, and it may be stated without exaggeration that India was bled absolutely white during the first week of the War.

It must not be forgotten, though Lord Hardinge has not reckoned it, that all wastages has been more than filled up, and 450,000 men represent this head; the increase in units has been 300,000 and including other military items, India had placed in the field up to the end of 1916 over a million of men.

In addition to this, a British force of 80,000 was sent from India, fully trained and equipped at India's cost, India, receiving in exchange, many months later, 34 Territorial battalions and 29 batteries, "unfit for immediate employment on the frontier or in Mesopotamia, until they had been entirely re-armed and equipped, and their training completed."

Between the autumn of 1914 and the close of 1915, the defence of our own frontiers was a serious matter, and Lord Hardinge says:

> The attitude of Afghanistan was for a long time doubtful, although I always had confidence in the personal loyalty of our ally the Amir; but I feared lest he might be overwhelmed by a wave of fanaticism, or by a successful Jehad of the tribes. . . . It suffices to mention that, although during the previous three years, there had been no operations of any importance on the North-West frontier, there were, between November 29, 1914, and September 5, 1915, no less than seven serious attacks on the North-West frontier, all of which were effectively dealt with.

The military authorities had also to meet a German conspiracy early in 1915; 7,000 men arriving from Canada and the United States, having planned to seize points of military vantage in the Punjab, and in December of the same year another German conspiracy in Bengal, necessitating military preparations on land, and also naval patrols in the Bay of Bengal.

Lord Hardinge has been much attacked by the Tory and Unionist Press in England and India, in England because of the Mesopotamia Report, in India because his love for India brought him hatred from Anglo-India. India has affirmed her confidence in him, and with India's verdict he may well rest satisfied.

I do not care to dwell on the Mesopotamia Commission and its condemnation of the bureaucratic system prevailing here. Lord Hardinge vindicated himself and India. The bureaucratic system remains undefended. I recall that bureaucratic inefficiency came out in even more startling fashion in connection with the Afghan War of 1878-79 and 1879-80. In February 1880, the war charges were reported as under £4 millions, and the accounts showed a surplus of £2 millions. On April 8th, the Government of India reported: "Outgoing for War very alarming, far exceeding estimate," and on the 13th April it was announced that the cash balances had fallen in three months from thirteen crores to less than nine, owing to 'excessive military drain' . . . . On the following day, April 22, a despatch was sent out to the Viceroy, showing that there appeared a deficiency of not less than 5¼ crores. This vast error was evidently due to an under-estimate of war liabilities, which had led to such mis-information being laid before Parliament, and to the sudden discovery of inability to meet the usual drawings."

It seemed that the Government knew only the amount audited, not the amount spent. Payments were entered as "advances," though they were not recoverable, and "the great negligence was evidently that of the heads of departmental accounts." If such a mishap should occur under Home Rule, a few years hence—which heaven forbid—I shudder to think of the comments of the *Englishman* and the *Madras Mail* on the shocking inefficiency of Indian officials.

In September last, our present Viceroy, H. E. Lord Chelmsford, defended India against later attacks by critics who try to minimise her sacrifices in order to lessen the

gratitude felt by Great Britain towards her, lest that gratitude should give birth to justice, and justice should award freedom to India. Lord Chelmsford placed before this Council "in studiously considered outline, a summary of what India has done during the past two years." Omitting his references to what was done under Lord Hardinge, as stated above, I may quote from him:

On the outbreak of War, of the 4,598 British officers on the Indian establishment, 530 who were at home on leave were detained by the War Office for service in Europe, 2,600 Combatant Officers have been withdrawn from India since the beginning of the War, excluding those who proceeded on service with their batteries or regiments. In order to make good these deficiencies and provide for war wastage the Indian Army Reserve of Officers was expanded from a total of 40, at which it stood on the 4th August, 1914, to one of 3,000.

The establishment of Indian units has not only been kept up to strength, but has been considerably increased. There has been an augmentation of 20 per cent. in the cavalry and of 40 per cent. in the infantry, while the number of recruits enlisted since the beginning of the War is greater than the entire strength of the Indian Army as it existed on the 4th August, 1914.

Lord Chelmsford rightly pointed out:

The Army in India has thus proved a great Imperial asset, and in weighing the value of India's contribution to the War, it should be remembered that India's forces were no hasty improvisation, but were an army in being fully equipped and supplied, which had previously cost India annually a large sum to maintain.

Lord Chelmsford has established what he calls a "Man-Power Board," the duty of which is "to collect and co-ordinate all the facts, with regard to the supply of man-power in India." It has branches in all the Provinces. A steady flow of reinforcements supplies the wastage at the various fronts, and the labour required for engineering, transport, etc., is now organised in 20 corps in Mesopotamia and 25 corps in France. In addition 60,000 artisans, labourers and specialists are serving in Mesopotomia and East Africa, and some 20,000 menials and followers have also gone overseas. Indian medical practitioners have accepted temporary commissions in the Indian Medical Service to the number of 500. In view o

this fact, due to Great Britain's bitter need of help may we not hope that this Service will welcome Indians in time of peace as well as in time of war, and will no longer bar the way by demanding the taking of a degree in the United Kingdom? It is also worthy of notice that the I. M. S. Officers in charge of district duties have been largely replaced by Indian medical men: this, again, should continue after the War. Another fact, that the Army Reserve of Officers has risen from 40 to 3,000 suggests that the throwing open of King's Commissions to qualified Indians should not be represented by a meagre nine. If English lads of 19 and 20 are worthy of King's Commissions—and the long roll of slain Second Lieutenants prove it—then certainly Indian lads, since Indians have fought as bravely as Englishmen, should find the door thrown open to them equally widely in their own country and the Indian Army should be led by Indian Officers.

With such a record of deeds as the one I have badly sketched, it is not necessary to say much in words as to India's support of Great Britain and her Allies. She has proved up to the hilt her desire to remain within the Empire, to maintain her tie with Great Britain. But if Great Britain is to call successfully on her man-power, as Lord Chelmsford suggests in his Man-Power Board, then must the man who fights or labours have a man's Rights in his own land. The lesson which springs out of this War is that it is absolutely necessary for the future safety of the Empire that India shall have Home Rule. Had her Man-Power been utilised earlier there would have been no War, for none would have dared to provoke Great Britain and India to a contest. But her man-power cannot be utilised while she is a subject Nation. She cannot afford to maintain a large army, if she is to support an English garrison, to pay for their goings and comings, to buy stores in England at exorbitant prices and send them back again when England needs them. She cannot afford to train men for England, and only have their services for five years. She cannot afford to keep huge Gold Reserves in

England, and be straightened for cash, while she lends to England out of her Reserves, taken from her over-taxation, £27,000,000 for War expenses, and this, be it remembered, before the great War Loan. I once said in England: "The condition of India's loyalty is India's freedom." I may now add: "The condition of India's usefulness to the Empire is India's freedom." She will tax herself willingly when her taxes remain in the country and fertilise it, when they educate her people and thus increase their productive power, when they foster her trade and create for her new industries.

Great Britain needs India as much as India needs England, for prosperity in Peace as well as for safety in War. Mr. Montagu has wisely said that "for equipment in War a Nation needs freedom in Peace." Therefore I say that for both countries alike, the lesson of the War is Home Rule for India.

Let me close this part of my subject by laying at the feet of His Imperial Majesty the loving homage of the thousands here assembled, with the hope and belief that, ere long, we shall lay there the willing and grateful homage of a free Nation.

CAUSES OF THE NEW SPIRIT IN INDIA

Apart from the natural exchange of thought between East and West, the influence of English education, literature and ideals, the effect of travel in Europe, Japan and the United States of America, and other recognised causes for the changed outlook in India, there have been special forces at work during the last few years to arouse a New Spirit in India, and to alter her attitude of mind. These may be summed up as:

(*a*) The Awakening of Asia.

(*b*) Discussions abroad on Alien Rule and Imperial Reconstruction.

(*c*) Loss of Belief in the Superiority of the White Races.

(*d*) The Awakening of the Merchants.

(*e*) The Awakening of the Women to claim their Ancient Position.

(*f*) The Awakening of the Masses.

Each of these causes has had its share in the splendid change of attitude in the Indian Nation, in the uprising of spirit of a pride of country, of independence, of self-reliance, of dignity, of self-respect. The War has quickened the rate of evolution of the world, and no country has experienced the quickening more than our Motherland.

(*a*) THE AWAKENING OF ASIA

In a conversation I had with Lord Minto, soon after his arrival as Viceroy, he discussed the so-called "unrest in India," and recognised it as the inevitable result of English education, of English ideals of Democracy, of the Japanese victory over Russia, and of the changing conditions in the outer world. I was therefore not surprised to read his remark that he recognised, "frankly and publicly that new aspirations were stirring in the hearts of the people that they were part of a larger movement common to the whole East, and that it was necessary to satisfy them to a reasonable extent by giving them a larger share in the administration."

But the present movement in India will be very poorly understood, if it be regarded only in connection with the movement in the East. The awakening of Asia is part of a world-movement, which has been quickened into marvellous rapidity by the world-war. The world-movement is towards Democracy, and for the West dates from the breaking away of the American Colonies from Great Britain, consummated in 1776, and its sequel in the French Revolution of 1789. Needless to say that its root was in the growth of modern science, undermining the fabric of intellectual servitude, in the work of the Encyclopædist, and in that of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and of Thomas Paine. In the East, the swift changes in Japan, the success of the Japanese Empire against Russia,

the downfall of the Manchu dynasty in China and the establishment of a Chinese Republic, the efforts at improvement in Persia, hindered by the interference of Russia and Great Britain with her growing ambition, and the creation of British and Russian "spheres of influence," depriving her of her just liberty, and now the Russian Revolution and the probable rise of a Russian Republic in Europe and Asia, have all entirely changed the conditions before existing in India. Across Asia, beyond the Himalayas, stretch free and self-ruling Nations. India no longer sees as her Asian neighbours the huge domains of a Tsar and a Chinese despot, and compares her condition under British rule with those of their subject populations. British rule profited by the comparison at least until 1905, when the great period of repression set in. But in future, unless India wins Self-Government, she will look enviously at her Self-Governing neighbours, and the contract will intensify her unrest.

But even if she gains Home Rule, as I believe she will, her position in the Empire will imperatively demand that she shall be strong as well as free. She becomes not only a vulnerable point in the Empire, as the Asian Nations evolve their own ambitions and rivalries, but also a possession to be battled for. Mr. Laing once said : " India is the milch-cow of England," a Kamadhenu, in fact, a cow of plenty ; and if that view should arise in Asia, the ownership of the milch-cow would become a matter of dispute, as of old between Vasishta and Vishvamitra. Hence India must be capable of self-defence both by land and sea. There may be a struggle for the primacy of Asia, for supremacy in the Pacific, for the mastery of Australasia, to say nothing of the inevitable trade struggles, in which Japan is already endangering Indian industry and Indian trade, while India is unable to protect herself.

In order to face these larger issues with equanimity the Empire requires a contented, strong, self-dependent and armed India, able to hold her own and to aid the Dominions, especially Australia with her small population

and immense unoccupied and undefended area. India alone has the man-power which can effectively maintain the Empire in Asia, and it is a short-sighted, a criminally short-sighted policy not to build up her strength as a Self-Governing State within the Commonwealth of Free Nations under the British Crown. The Englishmen in India talk loudly of their interests ; what can this mere handful do to protect their interests against attack in the coming years ? Only in a free and powerful India will they be safe. Those who read Japanese papers know how strongly, even during the War, they parade unchecked their pro-German sympathies, and how likely after the War is an alliance between these two ambitious and warlike Nations. Japan will come out of the War with her army and navy unweakened, and her trade immensely strengthened. Every consideration of sane statesmanship should lead Great Britain to trust India more than Japan, so that the British Empire in Asia may rest on the sure foundation of Indian loyalty, the loyalty of a free and contented people, rather than be dependent on the continued friendship of a possible future rival. For international friendships are governed by National interests, and are built on quicksands, not on rock.

Englishmen in India must give up the idea that English dominance is necessary for the protection of their interests, amounting, in 1915, to £365,399,000 sterling. They do not claim to dominate the United States of America, because they have invested there £688,078,000. They do not claim to dominate the Argentine Republic, because they have invested there £269,808,000. Why then should they claim to dominate India on the ground of their investment ? Britons must give up the idea that India is a possession to be exploited for their own benefit, and must see her as a friend, an equal, a Self-Governing Dominion within the Empire, a Nation like themselves, a willing partner in the Empire, and not a dependent. The democratic movement in Japan, China and Russia in Asia has sympathetically affected India, and it is idle to pretend that it will cease affect her.

(*b*) DISCUSSIONS ABROAD ON ALIEN RULE AND RECONSTRUCTION

But there are other causes which have been working in India consequent on the British attitude against autocracy and in defence of freedom in Europe, while her attitude to India has, until lately, been left in doubt. Therefore I spoke of a splendid opportunity lost. India at first believed whole-heartedly that Great Britain was fighting for the freedom of all Nationalities. Even now, Mr. Asquith declared—in his speech in the House of Commons reported here last October, on the peace resolution of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald—that "the Allies are fighting for nothing but freedom, and an important addition—for nothing short of freedom". In his speech declaring that Britain would stand by France in her claim for the restoration of Alsace-Lorraine, he spoke of "the intolerable degradation of a foreign yoke." Is such a yoke less intolerable, less wounding to self-respect, here than in Alsace-Lorraine, where the rulers and the ruled are both of European blood, similar in religion and unwillingly came to realise that the hatred of autocracy was confined to autocracy in the West, and that the degradation was only regarded as intolerable for men of white races; that freedom was lavishly promised to all except to India; that new powers were to be given to the Dominions, but not to India. India was markedly left out of the speeches of statesmen dealing with the future of the Empire, and at last there was plain talk of the White Empire, the Empire of the Five Nations, and "coloured races" were lumped together as the wards of the White Empire, doomed to an indefinite minority.

The peril was pressing; the menace unmistakable. The Reconstruction of the Empire was on the anvil; what was to be India's place therein? The Dominions were proclaimed as partners; was India to remain a Dependency? Mr. Bonar Law bade the Dominions strike while the iron was hot; was India to wait till

it was cold? India saw her soldiers fighting for freedom in Flanders, in France, in Gallipoli, in Asia Minor, in China, in Africa; was she to have no share of the freedom for which she fought? At last she sprang to her feet and cried, in the words of one of her noblest sons: "Freedom is my birthright; and I want it." The words "Home Rule" became her Mantram. She claimed her place in the Empire.

Thus, while she continued to support, and even to increase, her army abroad, fighting for the Empire, and poured out her treasures as water for Hospital Ships, War Funds, Red Cross Organisations and the gigantic War Loan, a dawning fear oppressed her, lest, if she did not take order with her own household, success in the War for the Empire might mean decreased liberty for herself.

The recognition of the right of the Indian Government to make its voice heard in Imperial matters, when they were under discussion in an Imperial Conference, was a step in the right direction. But disappointment was felt that while other countries were represented by responsible Ministers, the representation in India's case was of the Government, of a Government irresponsible to her and not the representative of herself. No fault was found with the choice itself, but only with the non-representative character of the chosen, for they were selected by the Government, and not by the elected members of the Supreme Council. This defect in the resolution moved by the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur M. M. Shafi on October 2,1915, was pointed out by the Hon. Mr. Surendranath Bannerji. He said:

My Lord, in view of a situation so full of hope and promise, it seems to me that my friend's Resolution does not go far enough. He pleads for *official* representation at the Imperial Conference: he does not plead for *popular* representation. He urges that an address be presented to His Majesty's Government, through the Secretary of State for India, for official representation at the Imperial Council. My Lord, official representation may mean little or nothing. It may indeed be attended with some risk; for I am sorry to have to say—but say it I must—that our officials do

not always see eye to eye with us as regards many great public questions which affect this country; and indeed their views, judged from our standpoint, may sometimes seem adverse to our interests. At the same time, my Lord, I recognise the fact that the Imperial Conference is an assemblage of officials pure and simple, consisting of Ministers of the United Kingdom and of the Self-governing Colonies. But, my Lord, there is an essential difference between them and ourselves. In their case the Ministers are the elect of the people, their organ and their voice, answerable to them for their conduct and their proceedings. In our case, our officials are public servants in name, but in reality they are the masters of the public. The situation may improve, and I trust it will, under the liberalising influence of Your Excellency's beneficent administration; but we must take things as they are, and not indulge in building castles in the air which may vanish "like the baseless fabric of a vision".

It was said to be an epoch-making event that "Indian Representatives" took part in the Conference. Representatives they were, but, as said, of the British Government in India, not of India, whereas their colleagues represented their Nations. They did good work, none the less, for they were able and experienced men, though they failed us in the Imperial Preference Conference and, partially, on the Indentured Labour question. Yet we hope that the presence in the Conference of men of Indian birth may prove to be the proverbial "thin end of the wedge," and may have convinced their colleagues that, while India was still a Dependency, India's sons were fully their equals.

The Report of the Public Services Commission, though now too obviously obsolete to be discussed, caused both disappointment and resentment; for it showed that, in the eyes of the majority of the Commissioners, English domination in Indian administration was to be perpetual, and that 30 years hence she would only hold a pitiful 25 per cent. of the higher appointments in the I. C. S. and the Police. I cannot, however, mention that Commission, even in passing, without voicing India's thanks to the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Rahim, for his rare courage in writing a solitary Minute of Dissent, in which he totally rejected the Report, and laid down the right principles which should govern recruitment for the Indian Civil Services.

India had but three representatives on the Commission; G. K. Gokhale died ere it made its Report, his end quickened by his sufferings during its work, by the humiliation of the way in which his countrymen were treated. Of Mr. Abdur Rahim I have already spoken. The Hon'ble Mr. M. B. Chaubal signed the Report, but dissented from some of its most important recommendations. The whole Report was written "before the flood," and it is now merely an antiquarian curiosity.

India, for all these reasons, was forced to see before her a future of perpetual subordination: the Briton rules in Great Britain, the Frenchman in France, the American in America, each Dominion in its own area, but the Indian was to rule nowhere; alone among the peoples of the world, he was not to feel his own country as his own. "Britain for the British" was right and natural; "India for the Indians" was wrong, even seditious. It must be "India for the Empire," or not even for the Empire, but "for the rest of the Empire", careless of herself. "British support for British Trade" was patriotic and proper in Britain. "Swadeshi goods for Indians" showed a petty and anti-Imperial spirit in India. The Indian was to continue to live perpetually, and even thankfully, as Gopal Krishna Gokhale said he lived now, in "an atmosphere of inferiority," and to be proud to be a citizen (without rights) of the Empire, while its other component Nations were to be citizens (with rights) in their own countries first, and citizens of the Empire secondarily. Just as this trust tn Great Britain was strained nearly to breaking point came the glad news of Mr. Montagu's appointment as Secretary of State for India, of the Viceroy's invitation to him, and of his coming to hear for himself what India wanted. It was a ray of sunshine breaking through the gloom, confidence in Great Britain revived, and glad preparation was made to welcome the coming of a friend.

The attitude of India has changed to meet the changed attitude of the Government of India and Great Britain. But let none imagine that that consequential change of attitude connotes any change in her

determination to win Home Rule. She is ready to consider terms of peace, but it must be "peace with honour," and honour in this connection means Freedom. If this be not granted, an even more vigorous agitation will begin.

(*c*) LOSS OF BELIEF IN THE SUPERIORITY OF THE WHITE RACES

The undermining of this belief dates from the spreading of the Arya Samaj and the Theosophical Society. Both bodies sought to lead the Indian people to a sense of the value of their own civilisation, to pride in their past, creating self-respect in the present and self-confidence in the future. They destroyed the unhealthy inclination to imitate the West in all things, and taught discrimination, the using only of what was valuable in western thought and culture, instead of a mere slavish copying of everything. Another great force was that of Swami Vivekananda, alike in his passionate love and admiration for India, and his exposure of the evils resulting from Materialism in the West. Take the following:

> Children of India, I am here to speak to you to-day about some practical things, and my object in reminding you about the glories of the past is simply this. Many times have I been told that looking into the past only degenerates and leads to nothing, and that we should look to the future. That is true. But out of the past is built the future. Look back, therefore, as far as you can, drink deep of the eternal fountains that are behind, and after that, look forward, march forward and make India brighter, greater, much higher than she ever was. Our ancestors were great. We must recall that. We must learn the elements of our being, the blood that courses in our veins; we must have faith in that blood, and what it did in the past; and out of that faith, and consciousness of greatness, we must build an India yet greater than what she has been.

And again:

> I know for certain that millions, I say deliberately, millions, in every civilised land are waiting for the message that will save them from the hideous abyss of materialism, into which modern money-worship is driving them headlong, and many of the leaders of the new Social Movements have already discovered that Vedanta in highest form can alone spiritualise their social aspirations.

The process was continued by the admiration of Sanskrit literature expressed by European scholars and philosophers. But the effect of these was confined to the few and did not reach the many. The first great shock to their belief in white superiority came from the triumph of Japan over Russia, the facing of a huge European Power by a comparatively small eastern Nation, the exposure of the weakness and rottenness of the Russian leaders, and the contrast with their hardy virile opponents, ready to sacrifice everything for their country.

The second great shock has come from the frank brutality of German theories of the State, and their practical carrying out in the treatment of conquered districts and the laying waste of evacuated areas in retreat. The teachings of Bismarck and their practical application in France, Flanders, Belgium, Poland and Serbia have destroyed all the glamour of the superiority of Christendom over Asia. Its vaunted civilisation is seen to be but a thin veneer, and its religion a matter of form rather than of life. Gazing from afar at the ghastly heaps of dead and the hosts of the mutilated, at science turned into devilry and ever inventing new tortures for rending and slaying, Asia may be forgiven for thinking that, on the whole, she prefers her own religions and her own civilisations.

But even deeper than the outer tumult of war has pierced the doubt as to the reality of the Ideals of Liberty and nationality so loudly proclaimed by the foremost western Nations, the doubt of the honesty of their champions. Sir James Meston said truly, a short time ago, that he had never, in his long experience, known Indians in so distrustful and suspicious a mood as that which he met in them to-day. And that is so. For long years Indians have been chafing over the many breaches of promises and pledges to them that remain unredeemed. The maintenance here of a system of political repression, of coercive measures increased in number and more harshly applied since 1905, the carrying of the system to a wider extent since the War for the sanctity of treaties and for the protection of Nationalities that has been going on, have

deepened the mistrust. A frank and courageous statesmanship applied to the honest carrying out of large reforms too long delayed, can alone remove it. The time for political tinkering is past; the time for wise and definite changes is here.

To these deep causes must be added the comparison between the progressive policy of some of the Indian States in matters which most affect the happiness of the people, and the slow advance made under British administration. The Indian notes that this advance is made under the guidance of rulers and ministers of his own race. When he sees that the suggestions made in the People's Assembly in Mysore are fully considered and, when possible, given effect to, he realises that without the forms of power, the members exercise more real power than those in our Legislative Councils. He sees education spreading, new industries fostered, villagers encouraged to manage their own affairs and take the burden of their own responsibility, and he wonders why Indian incapacity is so much more efficient than British capacity.

Perhaps, after all, for Indians, Indian rule may be the best.

(*d*) THE AWAKENING OF THE MERCHANTS

Of the many forces that have created New India, the awakening of the merchants into political life is perhaps the most potent, and the most pregnant with happy possibilities. Sir Dorab Tata, in the Industrial Conference in Bombay, 1915, advocated the yoking together of Politics and Industry. It is now coming about. Hitherto the merchants had remained immersed in their own occupations, but they were awakened by the War to the necessity of taking part in politics by finding that those very occupations were threatened with disaster by the attitude of the Government; as for instance, the refusal to lend a helping hand to industries which had been connected closely with German trade and were menaced with ruin by the War; by the refusal to aid the efforts made to replace

necessaries, hitherto supplied by Germany, by the founding or financing of factories for their production at home; by the restrictions put on trade under pretext of the War, that prevented the legitimate expansion of promising branches of industry; by the absence of effort to relieve the stringency of the money market, wealthy merchants being unable to obtain cash to meet their liabilities here, because their English debtors could not transmit the money they owed; some were even obliged to sell the depreciated Government paper at heavy loss in order to maintain their credit; in other cases War bonds were offered to them in lieu of cash for goods supplied. The details have varied in different centres, and the wealthy and independent merchants of Bombay have suffered less than the merchants of Madras, with whose difficulties I am naturally more familiar.

There, added difficulties constantly arise from the favouritism shown by the Presidency Bank to English, as compared with Indian, clients, and the absence of Indians from its Directorate, complained of for years. The anxiety felt by the merchants was largely increased by the depreciation of Government paper, and apart from the heavy losses of Capital incurred when necessity forced holders to sell for cash, an uneasy feeling arose as to the stability of the Government, when its securities fell so low.

Another disturbing cause was alienation during many years of lands and minerals to foreigners the Government looking on with indifference.

The copra and coir industry of the West Coast had passed into German hands; struck away from them by the War, there was danger of its being absorbed by the English; happily the firm of Tata & Sons stepped in and rescued it, and it remains an Indian industry. Ten years ago, the working of the blend known as monazite, an ingredient in munitions, was absorbed by Germany. Indian mica mines become German property. Undressed hides were exported

wholesale to Germany, although Mysore had shewn that they could be dressed and tanned better in Indian than in European factories, and only a little encouragement and help were needed to ensure their dressing and tanning, if not also their working here. Instead of that, the undressed hides were bought up by Government at a price fixed by themselves, and were largely exported to be dressed, tanned and worked abroad. The Viceroy speaking in the Supreme Council on September 5th last stated that large orders had been given to "tanners in India" and that experimental work in tanning had yielded results which promised success on a commercial scale; he expressed the hope that after the War the tanning industry would undergo a great expansion for general purposes. But hide merchants are distressed by an order that hides are to be purchased at War prices, the British War Office buying them to provide with leather goods the civilian population in Britain. But what has the War Office to do with providing boots for civilians, and why should India be drained for civil as well as for military purposes? If the tanning experiments are being carried on with India's money by experts paid by India, and not by British capitalists, then the outcome should be the property of India and enrich the people of the country, not British merchants and manufacturers settled here.

The War has turned the attention of Government to the wisdom of utilising India's immense natural resources, and the Viceroy speaks of organising these resources with "a view to making India more self-contained, and less dependent on the outer world for the supplies of manufactured goods." We heartily endorse this view. This has long been the cry from Indians; for India, with her varieties of soil and climate, can produce all the materials she needs, and with her surplus goods she can, as Phillimore said of her in the 17th century, with "the droppings of her soil feed distant nations." But the East India Company first, the British Government next, and lately exploiting bodies of Imperialist Traders have

vehemently insisted that India should supply raw materials, export them for manufacture abroad, and purchase, preferably within the Empire, the goods manufactured out of them. As Macaulay pointed out, the marvellous expansion of English industry was contemporaneous with the impoverishment of India. The reversal of this policy by the present Viceroy will earn India's undying gratitude, if he fosters Indian industries and not English industries in India. A witness before the Industries Commission stated that India should raise products for use outside, that is, as the East India Company put it, become a plantation for the supply of raw materials. The Viceroy must pardon us, if previous experience has made us anxious on this point. We cannot forget that a century ago the traces of iron were found in the Central Provinces and that nothing was done to extract the metal—England then being the world's shop for iron to her own huge profit, and not desiring a rival. It was left for Tata to seize the opportunity, and his shares of Rs. 30 are now sold at Rs. 1,180. He started a great industry, and Tata's steel is sought so largely that he cannot meet the demand. Had the iron been raised and worked here during these long years, we should not now be dependent on Britain for our machinery, the want of which cripples the efforts to found new industries and to expand old ones, in order to supply the demand caused by the necessary absorption of factories in Great Britain for War work.

The Viceroy remarks truly that previous " efforts were more sporadic than systematic," but proceeds :

> The marked success which has followed the organisation of research and demonstration work in scientific agriculture, and the assistance which has been given to the mineral industries by the Geological Survey are striking examples that encourage a bolder policy on similar lines for the benefit of other and especially the manufacturing industries.

Here, again, we must pause to remark that some of these experiments in scientific agriculture result in efforts to meet the demands of England, rather than those of India. India works up short-stapled cotton. Especially in her hand-loom industry, short-stapled cotton suits her.

Lancashire wants long-stapled, and cannot get enough from the United States and Egypt. Therefore, India should substitute long for short-stapled cotton. We confess we do not see the *sequitur*. Nor do we find in our study of English trade, that England, which is set up as an example to be copied, has followed self-denying ordinances, and has regulated her production so as to help foreign countries to her own detriment.

However, the War has done for India, in awakening the interest of the Government in her industries, that which the attempts of Indian patriots have failed to do. The War brought about the Industries Commission, and the need for munition has forced industrial organisation for their production. It is for Indian merchants to see, by seizing and utilising the political weapon, that the organisation and encouragement of industries by Government—unless it be a Home Government under their own control—does not reduce Indians to a more subordinate position than they now hold. It is this danger which is playing a great part in the fear which has caused the awakening of the Merchants. The tea industry, for instance, is in the hands of English planters, and while incomes drawn from other agricultural profits have been taxed, incomes derived from tea—which is certainly an agricultural profit—have wholly escaped till lately. If this policy be pursued, and the fostering of industries with Indian money places the industries in foreign hands, Indians will, even more than now, be dubashes, and clerks, and other employees of English-captained firms, and will depend ever more and more on wages, driven lower and lower by increasing competition.

The industrial prospects in India are by no means discouraging, if Indians exert themselves to hold their own. Mr. Tozer, in his *British India and its Trade*, says:

> The cotton aud jute manufactures, already conducted on a large scale, offer scope for still further development. Sugar and tobacco are produced in large quantities, but both require the application of the latest scientific processes of cultivation and manufacture. Oil seeds might be crushed in India instead of being exported; while

cotton seeds, as yet imperfectly utilised, can be turned to good account. Hides and skins, now largely exported raw, might be more largely tanned and dressed in India. Again, the woollen and silken fabrics manufactured in India are mostly coarse fabrics and there is scope for the production of finer goods. Although railways make their own rolling stock, they have to import wheels and axles, tyres and other iron work. At present steel is manufactured on a very small scale and the number of iron foundries and machine shops, although increasing, is capable of greater expansion Machinery and machine tools have for the most part to be imported. Millions of agriculturists and artisans use rude tools which might be replaced by similar articles that are more durable and of better make. Improved oil presses and hand-looms should find a profitable market. Paper-mills and flour-mills might be established in greater numbers. There are openings also for the manufacture of sewing machines, fire-works, rope, boots and shoes, saddlery, harness, clock, watches, aniline and alizarine dyes, electrical appliances, glass and glassware, tea chests, gloves, rice, starch, matches, lamps, candles, soap, linen, hardware and cutlery.

Obviously, India might be largely self-sufficing, and, as of old, export her surplus. But now her imports are rising, and under the present system her exports do not enrich her as they should.

Imports were steadily rising before the War, but dropped with it. (Amounts given in pounds sterling):

1911-12	£ 92,383,200	Piece-goods	28,592,000
1912-13	„ 107,332,490	„	35,536,000
1913-14	„ 122,165,203	„	38,758,000
1914-15	„ 91,952,600	„	28,643,000
1915-16	„ 87,560,169	„	25,175,000

The previous five years also show generally rising imports. (Amounts given in rupees):

1906-7	Rs.	135,50,85,676
1907-8	„	162,71,55,234
1908-9	„	143,89,75,796
1909-10	„	154,48,36,214
1910-11	„	169,05,72,729

Exports exceeded imports, and the War has made difficulties in the way of realising payment. (Amounts given in pounds sterling):

1911-12	£	147,879,060
1912-13	„	160,899,289
1913-14	„	162,807,900
1914-15	„	118,323,300
1915-16	„	128,356,619

Indian merchants have seen the swift expansion of Japanese trade, and know that it is fostered by the Japanese Government both by protection and with bounties. They have to compete with it in their own land. Is it any wonder that they desire an Indian Government? They see Japanese goods underselling them and flooding their own markets. Is it any wonder that they desire a Home Government, that will put duties on these foreign goods and protect their own products?

The furious uprising of the European Associations, ever indifferent to politics which only concern Indian interests, has shown them that their trade rivals dread the transfer of power, because they fear to lose the unfair privileges and advantages which they have always enjoyed, since the humble traders of the seventeenth century became the masters of India. They are not accustomed to a struggle on equal terms, and the prospect dismays them. They want privilege, not justice and a fair field. Much of their fear and anger, the need felt by Sir Hugh Bray for English dominance for the protection of English interests, lie in the fact that they dread the budget of a Home Government, even more than they dread a fair trade competition.

The Indian merchants now realise that, in the trade-war after the end of the present War, they will go down unless they have power in their own country. Trade, commerce, industry, organised by the countrymen of the European Chambers of Commerce and Trade Associations, mean ruin to the Indian merchants, traders and manufacturers. The favouritism of Governments and English Banks has spelt hard struggle during the period when organisation was wanting. When it is accompanied by organisation created and ruled by the foreigners, it will spell ruin. Mr. J. W. Root has rightly observed that to give Great Britain, under present circumstances,

> the control over Indian foreign trade and internal industry that would be secured by a common tariff would be an unpardonable iniquity. . . Can it be conceived that, were India's fiscal

arrangements placed to any considerable extent under the control of British legislators, they would not be regulated with an eye to British interests? Intense jealousy of India is always cropping up in everything affecting fiscal or industrial legislation.

Indian merchants are fully alive to this danger, and to avert it they are welcoming Home Rule.

The merchants also realise that fiscal autonomy can only come with political autonomy. Only the illogical demand fiscal autonomy and reject Home Rule. A budget framed by an Indian Finance Member would aim at a much increased expenditure on education, sanitation and irrigation—an expenditure that would result in increased capacity and increased health for the citizens and increased productiveness for the land. Railways would be constructed out of loans raised for the particular project, not out of revenue. Administration charges would be reduced by the reduction of salaries and greater economy. They have increased in a decade by Rs. 160 millions.

On the revenue side, the taxation on land would be lightened, so that cultivators might make a decent living by their labour. Exports of Indian monopolies, such as jute and indigo, would be heavily taxed. Imports would be taxed according to India's needs, and heavy duties laid on bounty-fed products. Imported liquors would carry a prohibitory duty, and they were imported in 1910-11 to the value of Rs. 1,89,81,666. Provisions, which were imported to the value of over 3 crores of rupees, might also be heavily taxed, being a luxury. Sugar rose in five years from 10 crores of rupees to 14 crores, and should be heavily taxed, so as to encourage its growth here. Cotton piece-goods have risen from 37 crores to 41 crores and India should supply herself, as well as with silk piece-goods, risen from 1¾ crores to 2¾ crores. Army expenditure at the moment cannot be reduced, but later, territorial armies would be raised and large reserves gradually formed. For a time English troops would remain, as in the South African Union, but the

short service system would be abolished, and recruiting charges reduced.

Even so hasty a glance over the economic condition of India makes very plain the reasons for the awakening of Indian Merchants, and their entry into the Home Rule Camp.

(*e*) THE AWAKENING OF THE WOMEN

The position of women in the ancient Aryan civilisation was a very noble one. The great majority married, becoming, as Manu said, the Light of the Home; some took up the ascetic life, remained unmarried, and sought the knowledge of Brahman. The story of the Rani Damayanti, to whom her husband's ministers came, when they were troubled by the Raja's gambling; that of Gandhari, in the Council of Kings and warrior chiefs, remonstrating with her headstrong son; in later days, those of Padmini of Chittoor, of Mirabai of Marwar the sweet poetess, of Tarabai of Thoda the warrior, of Chand Bibi the defender of Ahmednagar, of Ahalya Bai of Indore the Great Ruler—all these and countless others are well known.

Only in the last five or six generations has the Indian woman slipped away from her place at her husband's side, and left him unhelped in his public life. Even now, they wield great influence over husband and son, but lack through knowledge to aid. Culture has never forsaken them, but the English education of their husbands and sons, with the neglect of Sanskrit and the Vernacular, have made a barrier between the culture of the husband and that of the wife, and have shut the woman out from her old sympathy with the larger life of men. While the interests of the husband have widened, those of the wife have narrowed. The materialising of the husband has tended also, by reaction, to render the wife's religion less broad and wise, and by throwing her on the family priest for guidance in religion, instead, as of old, on her husband, has made the religion entirely one of devotion; and lacking the strong stimulus of knowledge, it more easily slides

down into superstition, into dependence on forms not understood.

The wish to save their sons from the materialising results of English education awoke keen sympathy among Indian mothers with the movement to make Hinduism an integral part of education. It was, perhaps, the first movement in modern days which aroused among them in all parts of India a keen and living interest.

Then the troubles of Indians outside India roused the ever-quick sympathy of Indian women, and the attack in South Africa on the sacredness of Indian marriage drew large numbers of them out of their homes, to protest against the wrong.

The Partition of Bengal was bitterly resented by Bengali women, and was another factor in the outward turning change. When the editor of an extremist newspaper was prosecuted for sedition, convicted and sentenced, 500 Bengali women went to his mother to shew their sympathy, not by condolences, but by congratulations. Such was the feeling of the well-born women of Bengal.

The Indentured Labour question, involving the dishonour of women, again, moved them deeply and, even sent a deputation to the Viceroy composed of women.

These were, perhaps, the chief outer causes; but deep in the heart of India's daughters arose the Mother's voice, calling on them to help her to arise, and to be once more mistress in her own household. Indian women, nursed on her old literature, with its wonderful ideals of womanly perfection, could not remain indifferent to the great movement for India's liberty. And during the last few years the hidden fire long burning in their hearts, fire of love to Bharatamata, fire of resentment against the lessened influence of the religion which they passionately love, instinctive dislike of the foreigner as ruling in their land, have caused a marvellous awakening. The strength of the Home Rule movement is rendered ten-

fold greater by the adhesion to it of large numbers of women, who bring to its helping the uncalculating heroism, the endurance, the self-sacrifice of the feminine nature. Our League's best recruits and recruiters are among the women of India, and the women of Madras boast that they marched in procession when the men were stopped, and that their prayers in the temples set the interned captives free. Home Rule has become so intertwined with religion by the prayers offered up in the great Southern Temples—sacred places of pilgrimage—and spreading from them to village temples, and also by its being preached, up and down the country, by Sadhus and Sannyasins, that it has become in the minds of the women and of the ever-religious masses, inextricably intertwined with religion. That is, in this country, the surest way of winning alike the women of the higher classes and the men and women villagers. And that is why I have said that the two words, "Home Rule," have become a Mantram.

(*f*) THE AWAKENING OF THE MASSES

This is another startling phenomenon of our times, due of late to the teaching of Sadhus and Sannyasins and the campaign of prayer, just mentioned, but much more to the steady influence of the educated classes permeating the masses for very many years, the classes which, as we shall see, have their roots struck deep in the villages. It must be remembered that the raiyat, though innocent of English, has a culture of his own, made up of old traditions and legends and folk-lore, coming down from time immemorial. He is religious, knows the great laws of Karma and Reincarnation, is industrious and shrewd. He cares very little for who is the "Sirkar," and very much for the agents who come to collect his tax, or to meddle with his fields. In the old days, which, for him, still live, the Panchayat managed the village affairs, and he was prosperous and contented, save when the King's tax-gatherer came or soldiers harried his village. These were inevitable natural evils, like drought or flood; and if a raid came or an invasion, they felt they were suffering with their King, and in the tax they were sharing with their King, whereas they

are crushed now in an iron machinery, without the human nexus that used to exist.

Home Rule has touched the raiyat through his village life, where the present order presses hard upon him in ways that I shall refer to when dealing with agricultural conditions. He resents the rigid payment of tax in money instead of the variable tax in kind, the King's share of the produce. He resents the frequent resettlements, which force him to borrow from the money-lender to meet the higher claim. He wants the old Panchayat back again; he wants that his village should be managed by himself and his fellows, and he wants to get rid of the tyranny of petty officials, who have replaced the old useful communal servants.

We cannot leave out of the causes which have helped to awaken the masses, the influence of the co-operative movement, and the visits paid to villages by educated men for lectures on sanitation, hygiene and other subjects. Messrs. Moreland and Ewing, writing in the *Qaarterly Review*, remarked :

> The change of attitude on the part of the peasant coupled with the progress made in organisation mainly through the co-operative propaganda, is the outstanding achievement of the past decade, and at the same time the chief ground for the recent confidence with which agricultural reformers can now face the future.

In many parts of the country, where Conferences are carried in the vernacular, the raiyats attend in large numbers, and often take part in the practical discussions on local affairs. They have begun to hope, and to feel that they are a part of the great National Movement, and that for them also a better day is dawning.

The submerged classes have also felt the touch of a ray of hope, and are lifting up their bowed heads, and claiming, with more and more definiteness, their place in the Household of the Mother. Movements, created by themselves, or originating in the higher castes, have been stirring in them a sense of self-respect. The Brahmanas, awakening to a sense of their long-neglected duty, have done much to help them, and the prospect of their future brightens year by year.

By a just karma the higher castes are finding that attempts are being made by official and non-official Europeans to stir this class into opposition to Home Rule. They play upon the contempt with which they had been treated, and threaten them with a return of it, if "Brahmana Rule," as they call it, is gained. Twenty years ago and more, I ventured to urge the danger to Hindu Society that was hidden within the neglect of the submerged, and the folly of making it profitable for them to embrace Islam or Christianity, which offered them a higher social status. Much has been done since then, but it is only a drop in the ocean needed. They know very well, of course, that all the castes, not the highest alone, are equally guilty, but that is a sorry comfort. Large numbers of them are, happily, willing to forget the past, and to work with their Indian fellow-countrymen for the future. It is the urgent duty of every lover of the Motherland to draw these, her neglected children, into the common home.

Mr. Gandhi's capital idea of a monster petition for the Congress-League scheme, for which signatures were only to be taken after careful explanation of its scope and meaning, has proved to be an admirable method of political propaganda. The soil in the Madras Presidency had been well prepared by a wide distribution of popular literature and the Propaganda Committee had scattered over the land in the vernaculars a simple explanation of Home Rule. The result of active work in the villages during the last year showed itself in the gathering in less than a month of nearly a million signatures. They have been taken in duplicate, so that we have a record of a huge number of people interested in Home Rule, and the hosts will increase in ever widening circles, preparing for the coming Freedom.

WHY INDIA DEMANDS HOME RULE

India demands Home Rule for two reasons: one essential and vital, the other less important but weighty. First, because Freedom is the birthright of every Nation; secondly, because her most important interests are now made subservient to the interests of the British Empire

without her consent, and her resources are not utilised for her greatest needs. It is enough only to mention the money spent on her Army, not for local defence but for Imperial purposes, as compared with that spent on primary education.

I. THE VITAL REASON

(a) *What is a Nation?*

Self-Government is necessary to the self-respect and dignity of a people; other Government emasculates a Nation, lowers its character, and lessens its capacity. The wrong done by the Arms Act, which Raja Rampal Singh voiced in the Second Congress as a wrong which outweighed all the benefits of British Rule, was its weakening and debasing effect on Indian manhood. "We cannot," he declared, "be grateful to it for degrading our natures, for systematically crushing out all martial spirit, for converting a race of soldiers and heroes into a timid flock of quill-driving sheep." This was done not by the fact that a man did not carry arms—few carry them in England—but that men were deprived of the *right* to carry them. A Nation, an individual, cannot develop his capacities to the utmost, without Liberty. And this is recognised everywhere except in India. As Mazzini truly said:

> God has written a line of His thought over the cradle of every people. That is its special mission. It cannot be cancelled; it must be freely developed.

For, what is a Nation? It is a spark of the Divine Fire, a fragment of the Divine Life, outbreathed into the world, and gathering round itself a mass of individuals, men, women and children, whom it binds together into one. Its qualities, its powers, in a word, its type, depend on the fragment of the Divine Life embodied in it, the Life which shapes it, colours it and makes it One. The magic of Nationality is the feeling of oneness, and the use of nationality is to serve the world in the particular way for which its type fits it. This is what Mazzini called "its special mission," the duty given to it by God in its

birth-hour. Thus India had the duty of spreading the idea of Dharma, Persia that of Purity, Egypt that of Science, Greece that of Beauty, Rome that of Law. But to render its full service to Humanity it must develop along its own lines, and be Self-determined in its evolution. It must be Itself, and not Another. The whole world suffers where a Nationality is distorted or suppressed, before its mission to the world is accomplished.

(b) The Cry for Self-Rule.

Hence the cry of a Nation for Freedom, for Self-Rule, is not a cry of mere selfishness demanding more Rights that it may enjoy more happiness. Even in that there is nothing wrong; for happiness means fulness of life, and to enjoy such fulness is a righteous claim. But the demand for Self-Rule is a demand for the evolution of its own nature for the service of Humanity. It is a demand of the deepest spirituality, an expression of the longing to give its very best to the world. Hence dangers cannot check it, nor threats appal, nor offerings of greater pleasures lure it to give up its demand for Freedom. In the adapted words of a Christian Scripture, it passionately cries: "What shall it profit a Nation if it gain the whole world and lose its own Soul?" What shall a Nation give in exchange for its Soul?" Better hardship and freedom, than luxury and thraldom. This is the spirit of the Home Rule movement, and therefore it cannot be crushed, it cannot be destroyed, it is eternal and ever young. Nor can it be persuaded to exchange its birthright for any mess of efficiency-pottage at the hands of the bureaucracy.

(c) Stunting the Race.

Coming closer to the daily life of the people as individuals, we see that the character of each man, woman and child is degraded and weakened by a foreign administration, and this is most keenly felt by the best Indians. Speaking on the employment of Indians in the Public Services, Gopal Krishna Gokhale said:

A kind of dwarfing or stunting of the Indian race is going on under the present system. We must live all the days of our life in

an atmosphere of inferiority and the tallest of us must bend, in order that the exigencies of the system may be satisfied. The upward impulse, if I may use such an expression, which every school boy at Eton or Harrow may feel, that he may one day be a Gladstone, a Nelson, or a Washington, and which may draw forth the best efforts of which he is capable, that is denied to us. The full height to which our manhood is capable of rising can never be reached by us under the present system. The moral elevation which every self-governing people feel cannot be felt by us. Our administrative and military talents must gradually disappear owing to sheer disuse, till at last our lot, as hewers of wood and drawers of water in our own country, is stereotyped.

The Hon. Mr. Bhupendranath Basu has spoken on similar lines:

A bureaucratic administration, conducted by an imported agency, and centering all power in its hands, and undertaking all responsibility, has acted as a dead weight on the Soul of India, stifling in us all sense of initiative, for the lack of which we are condemned, atrophying the nerves of action and, what is most serious, necesarily dwarfing in us all feeling of self-respect.

In this connection the warning of Lord Salisbury to Cooper's Hill students is significant:

No system of Government can be permanently safe where there is a feeling of inferiority or of mortification affecting the relations between the governing and the governed. There is nothing I would more earnestly wish to impress upon all who leave this country for the purpose of governing India than that, if they choose to be so, they are the only enemies England has to fear. They are the persons who can, if they will, deal a blow of the deadliest character at the future rule of England.

I have ventured to urge this danger, which has increased of late years, in consequence of the growing self-respect of the Indians. But the ostrich policy is thought to be preferable in many parts of the country.

This stunting of the race begins with the education of the child. The schools differentiate between British and Indian teachers; the Colleges do the same. The students see first-class Indians superseded by young and third-rate foreigners; the Principal of a College should be a foreigner; foreign history is more important than Indian; to have written on English villages is a qualification for teaching economics in India; the whole atmosphere of the School

and College emphasises the superiority of the foreigner, even when the professors abstain from open assertion thereof. The Education Department controls the education given, and it is planned on foreign models, and its object is to serve foreign rather than native ends, to make docile Government servants rather than patriotic citizens; high spirits, courage, self-respect, are not encouraged, and docility is regarded as the most precious quality in the student; pride in country, patriotism, ambition are looked on as dangerous, and English, instead of Indian, ideals are exalted; the blessings of a foreign rule and the incapacity of Indians to manage their own affairs constantly inculcated. What wonder that boys thus trained often turn out, as men, timeservers and sycophants, and, finding their legitimate ambitions frustrated, become selfish and care little for the public weal? Their own inferiority has been so driven into them during their most impressionable years that they do not even feel what Mr. Asquith called the "intolerable degradation of a foreign yoke."

(d) India's Rights.

It is not a question whether the rule is good or bad. German efficiency in Germany is far greater than English efficiency in England; the Germans were better fed, had more amusements and leisure, less crushing poverty than the English. But would any Englishman therefore desire to see Germans occupying all the highest positions in England? Why not? Because the righteous self-respect and dignity of the free man revolt against foreign domination, however superior. As Mr. Asquith said at the beginning of the War, such a condition was "inconceivable and would be intolerable". Why then is it the one conceivable system here in India? Why is it not felt by all Indians to be intolerable? It is because it has become a habit, bred in us from childhood, to regard the saheb-lok as our natural superiors, and the greatest injury British rule has done to Indians is to deprive them of the natural instinct born in all free peoples, the feeling of an inherent right to Self-determination, to be themselves. Indian dress, Indian food, Indian ways, Indian customs are all looked

on as second rate; Indian mother-tongue and Indian literature cannot make an educated man. Indians as well as Englishmen take it for granted that the natural rights of every Nation do not belong to them; they claim "a larger share in the government of the country," instead of claiming the government of their own country, and they are expected to feel grateful for "boons", for concessions. Britain is to say what she will give. The whole thing is wrong, topsy-turvy, irrational. Thank God that India's eyes are opening; that myriads of her people realise that they are men, with a man's right to freedom in his own country, a man's right to manage his own affairs. India is no longer on her knees for boons; she is on her feet for Rights. It is because I have taught this, that the English in India misunderstand me, and call me seditious; it is because I have taught this, that I am President of this Congress to-day.

This may seem strong language, because the plain truth is not usually put in India. But this is what every Briton feels in Britain for his own country, and what every Indian should feel in India for his. This is the Freedom for which the Allies are fighting; this is Democracy, the Spirit of the Age. And this is what every true Briton will feel is India's Right, the moment India claims it for herself, as she is claiming it now. When this Right is gained, then will the tie between India and Great Britain become a golden link of mutual love and service, and the iron chain of a foreign yoke will fall away. We shall live and work side by side, with no sense of distrust and dislike, working as brothers for common ends. And from that union shall arise the mightiest Empire, or rather Commonwealth, that the world has ever known, a Commonwealth that, in God's good time, shall put an end to War.

II. THE SECONDARY REASONS

(*a*) *Tests of Efficiency.*

The Secondary Reasons for the present demand for Home Rule may be summed up in the blunt statement: "The present rule, while efficient in less important matters

and in those which concern British interests, is inefficient in the greater matters on which the healthy life and happiness of the people depend." Looking at outer things, such as external order, posts and telegraphs—except where political agitators are concerned—main roads, railways, etc., foreign visitors, who expected to find a semi-savage country, hold up their hands in admiration. But if they saw the life of the people, the masses of struggling clerks trying to educate their children on Rs. 25 (28s. 0¼d.) a month, the masses of labourers with one meal a day, and the huts in which they live, they would find cause for thought. And if the educated men talked freely with them they would be surprised at their bitterness. Gopal Krishna Gokhale put the whole matter very plainly in 1911:

> One of the fundamental conditions of the peculiar position of the British Government in this country is that it should be a continuously progressive Government. I think all thinking men to whatever community they belong, will accept that. Now, I suggest four tests to judge whether the Government is progressive, and further whether it is continuously progressive. The first test that I would apply is what measures it adopts for the moral and material improvement of the mass of the people, and under these measures I do not include those appliances of modern Governments which the British Government has applied in this country, because they were appliances necessary for its very existence, though they have benefited the people, such as the construction of Railways, the introduction of Posts and Telegraphs, and things of that kind. By measures for the moral and the material improvement of the people, I mean what the Government does for education, what the Government does for sanitation, what the Government does for agricultural development, and so forth. That is my first test. The second test that I would apply is what steps the Government takes to give us a larger share in the administration of our local affairs—in municipalities and local boards. My third test is what voice the Government gives us in its Councils—in those deliberative assemblies, where policies are considered. And, lastly, we must consider how far Indians are admitted into the ranks of the public service.

(*b*) *A Change of System Needed—Officials.*

Those were Gokhale's tests, and Indians can supply the results of their knowledge and experience to answer them. But before dealing with the failure

to meet these tests, it is necessary to state here that it is not a question of blaming men, or of substituting Indians for Englishmen, but of changing the system itself. It is a commonplace that the best men become corrupted by the possession of irresponsible power. As Bernard Houghton says: "The possession of unchecked power corrupts some of the finer qualities." Officials quite honestly come to believe that those who try to change the system are undermining the security of the State. They identify the State with themselves, so that criticism of them is seen as treason to the State. The phenomenon is well known in history, and it is only respecting itself in India. The same writer—I prefer to use his words rather than my own, for he expresses exactly my own views, and will not be considered to be prejudiced as I am thought to be—cogently remarks:

He (the official) has become an expert in reports and returns and matters of routine through many years of practice. They are the very woof and warp of his brain. He has no ideas, only reflexes. He views with acrid disfavour untried conceptions. From being constantly pre-occupied with the manipulation of the machine he regards its smooth working, the ordered and harmonious regulation of glittering pieces of machinery, as the highest service he can render to the country of his adoption. He determines that his particular cog-wheel at least shall be bright, smooth, silent, and with absolutely no back-lash. Not unnaturally in course of time he comes to envisage the world through the strait embrasure of an office window. When perforce he must report on new proposals he will place in the forefront, not their influence on the life and progress of the people, but their convenience to the official hierarchy and the manner in which they affect its authority. Like the monks of old, or the squire in the typical English village, he cherishes a benevolent interest in the commonalty, and is quite willing, even eager, to take a general interest in their welfare, if only they do not display initiative or assert themselves in opposition to himself or his order. There is much in this proviso. Having come to regard his own judgment as almost divine, and the hierarchy of which he has the honour to form a part as a sacrosanct institution, he tolerates the laity so long as they labour quietly and peaceably at their vocations and do not presume to intermeddle in high matters of State. That is the heinous offence. And frank criticism of official acts touches a lower depth still, even *lese majeste*. For no official will endure criticism from his subordinates, and the public, who lie in outer darkness beyond the pale, do not in his estimation rank even with his subordinates. How, then, should he listen with patience when

In their cavilling way they insinuate that, in spite of the labours of a high souled bureaucracy, all is perhaps not for the best in the best of all possible worlds—still less when they suggest reforms that had never occurred even to him or to his order, and may clash with his most cherished ideals? It is for the officials to govern the country; they alone have been initiated into the sacred mysteries; they alone understand the secret working of the machine. At the utmost the laity may tender respectful and humble suggestions for their consideration, but no more. As for those who dare to think and act for themselves, their ignorant folly is only equalled by their arrogance. It is as though a handful of school boys were to dictate to their masters alterations in the traditional time-table, or to insist on a modified curriculum . . . . These worthy people [officials] confuse manly independence with disloyalty; they cannot conceive of natives except either as rebels or as timid sheep.

(c) *Non-Official Anglo-Indians.*

The problem becomes more complicated by the existence in India of a small but powerful body of the same race as the higher officials; there are only 122,919 English born persons in this country, while there are 255,000,000 in the British Raj and another 70,000,000 in the Indian States, more or less affected by British influence. As a rule, the non-officials do not take any part in politics, being otherwise occupied; but they enter the field when any hope arises in Indian hearts of change really beneficial to the Nation. John Stuart Mill observed on this point:

The individuals of the ruling people who resort to the foreign country to make their fortunes are of all others those who most need to be held under powerful restraint. There are always one of the chief difficulties of the Government. Armed with the prestige and filled with the scornful overbearingness of the conquering Nation, they have the feelings inspired by absolute power without its sense of responsibility.

Similarly, Sir John Lawrence wrote:

The difficulty in the way of the Government of India acting fairly in these matters is immense. If anything is done, or attempted to be done, to help the natives, a general howl is raised, which reverberates in England, and finds sympathy and support there. I feel quite bewildered sometimes what to do. Every one is, in the abstract, for justice, moderation and such like excellent

qualities; but when one comes to apply such principles so as to affect anybody's interests, then a change comes over them.

Keene, speaking of the principle of treating equally all classes of the community, says:

The application of that maxim, however, could not be made without sometimes provoking opposition among the handful of white settlers in India who, even when not connected with the administration, claimed a kind of class ascendancy which was not only in the conditions of the country but also in the nature of the case. It was perhaps natural that in a land of caste the compatriots of the rulers should become—as Lord Lytton said—a kind of "white Brahmanas", and it was certain that, as a matter of fact, the pride of race and the possession of Western civilisation created a sense of superiority, the display of which was ungraceful and even dangerous, when not tempered by official responsibility. This feeling had been sensitive enough in the days of Lord William Bentinck, when the class referred to was small in numbers and devoid of influence. It was now both more numerous, and—by reason of its connection with the newspapers of Calcutta and of London—it was far better able to make its passion heard.

During Lord Ripon's sympathetic administration the great outburst occurred against the Ilbert Bill in 1883. We are face to face with a similar phenomenon to-day, when we see the European Associations—under the leadership of the *Madras Mail*, the *Englishman* of Calcutta, the *Pioneer* of Allahabad, the *Civil and Military Gazette* of Lahore, with their Tory and Unionist allies in the London press, and with the aid of retired Indian officials and non-officials in England—desperately resisting the Reforms now proposed. Their opposition, we know, is a danger to the movement towards Freedom, and even when they have failed to impress England—as they are evidently failing—they will try to minimise or smother here the reforms which a statute has embodied. The Minto-Morley reforms were thus robbed of their usefulness, and a similar attempt, if not guarded against, will be made when the Congress-League Scheme is used as the basis for an Act.

(d) The Reaction on England.

We cannot leave out of account here the deadly harm done to England herself by this un-English system of rule in India. Mr. Hobson has pointed out:

As our free Self-Governing Colonies have furnished hope, encouragement, and leading to the popular aspirations in Great Britain, not merely by practical success in the art of Self-Government, but by the wafting of a spirit of freedom and equality, so our despotically ruled Dependencies have ever served to damage the character of our people by feeding the habits of snobbish subservience, the admiration of wealth and rank, the corrupt survivals of the inequalities of feudalism. . . . Cobden writing in 1860 of our Indian Empire, put this pithy question: "Is it not just possible that we may become corrupted at home by the reaction of arbitrary political maxims in the East upon our domestic politics, just as Greece and Rome were demoralised by their contact with Asia?" Not merely is the reaction possible, it is inevitable. As the despotic portion of our Empire has grown in area, a larger number of men, trained in the temper and methods of autocracy, as soldiers and civil officials in our Crown Colonies, Protectorates and Indian Empire, reinforced by numbers of merchants, planters, engineers and overseers, whose lives have been those of a superior caste living an artificial life removed from all the healthy restraints of ordinary European Society, have returned to the country, bringing back the characters, sentiments and ideas imposed by this foreign environment.

It is a little hard on the I. C. S. that they should be foreigners here, and then, when they return to their native land, find that they have become foreigners there by the corrupting influences with which they are surrounded here. We import them as raw material to our own disadvantage, and when we export them as manufactured here, Great Britain and India alike suffer from their reactionary tendencies. The results are unsatisfactory to both sides.

(*e*) *The First Test Applied*

Let us now apply Gokhale's first test. What has the Bureaucracy done for "education, sanitation, agricultural improvement, and so forth"? I must put the facts very briefly, but they are indisputable.

Education.—The percentage to the whole population of children receiving education is 2·8, the percentage having risen by 0·9 since Mr. Gokhale moved his Education Bill six years ago. But even this percentage is illusory. It is recognised by educationists that children

taught for less than four years lose what they had learned during that time. In the *Educational Statistics* (British India) for 1914-15, we find that 6,333,668 boys and 1,128,363 girls were under instruction, 7,462,031 children in all. Of these 5,434,576 had not passed the Lower Primary stage, and of these 1,680,561 could not even read. If these be deducted from the total, we have only 2,027,455 children receiving education useful to them, giving us the appalling figure of ·83 per cent. The money spent on the 5½ millions might as well be thrown into the Bay of Bengal. The percentage of children of school-going age attending school was 20·4 at the end of 1915. In 1913, the Government of India put the number of pupils at 4½ millions; this has been accomplished in 59 years, reckoning from Sir Charles Wood's Educational Despatch in 1854, which led to the formation of the Education Department. In 1870, an Education Act was passed in Great Britain, the condition of education in England then much resembling our present position; grants-in-aid in England had been given since 1833, chiefly to Church Schools. Between 1870 and 1881 free and compulsory education was established, and in 12 years the attendance rose from 43·3 to nearly 100 per cent. There are now 6,000,000 children in the schools of England and Wales out of a population of 40 millions. Japan, before 1872, had a proportion of 28 per cent. of children of school-going age in school, nearly 8 over our present proportion; in 24 years the percentage was raised to 92, and in 28 years education was free and compulsory. In Baroda, education is free and largely compulsory and the percentage of boys is 100 per cent. Travancore has 81·1 per cent. of boys and 33·2 of girls. Mysore has 45·8 of boys and 9·7 of girls. Baroda spends 6·6 annas per head on school-going children, British India annas three. Expenditure on education advanced between 1882 and 1907 by 57 lakhs. Land revenue had increased by 8 crores, military expenditure by 13 crores, civil by 8 crores, and capital outlay on railways was 15 crores. (I am quoting G. K. Gokhale's figures.) He ironically calculated that if the population did not increase, every boy

would be in school 115 years hence, and every girl in 665 years. Brother-Delegates, we hope to do it more quickly under Home Rule. I submit that in Education the Bureaucracy is inefficient.

Sanitation and Medical Relief.—The prevalence of plague, cholera, and above all malaria, shew the lack of sanitation alike in town and country. This lack is one of the causes contributing to the low average of life-period in India—23·5 years. In England the life-period is 40 years, in New Zealand 60. The chief difficulty in the way of the treatment of disease is the encouragement of the foreign system of medicine, especially in rural parts, and the withholding of grants from the indigenous Government Hospitals, Government Dispensaries, Government doctors must all be on the foreign system. Ayurvedic and Unani medicines, Hospitals, Dispensaries, Physicians are unrecognised, and to "cover" the latter is "infamous" conduct. Travancore gives grants-in-aid to 72 Vaidyashalas, at which 143,505 patients—22,000 more than in allopathic institutions—were treated in 1914-15 (the Report issued in 1917). Our Government cannot grapple with the medical needs of the people, yet will not allow the people's money to be spent on the systems they prefer. Under Home Rule, the indigenous and the foreign systems will be treated with impartiality. I grant that the allopathic doctors do their utmost to supply the need, and show great self-sacrifice, but the need is too vast and their numbers too few. Efficiency on their own lines in this matter is therefore impossible for our bureaucratic Government; their fault lies in excluding the indigenous systems, which they have not condescended to examine before rejecting them. The result is that in sanitation and medical relief the Bureaucracy is inefficient.

Agricultural Development.—The census of 1911 gives the agricultural population at 218·3 millions. Its frightful poverty is a matter of common knowledge; its ever-increasing load of indebtedness has been dwelt on for at least the last 30 odd years by Sir Dinshaw E. Wacha. Yet the increasing debt is accompanied with increasing

taxation, land revenue having risen, as just stated, in 25 years, by 8 crores—80,000,000—of rupees. In addition to this there are local cesses, salt tax, etc. The salt tax, which presses most hardly on the very poor, was raised in the last budget by Rs. 9 millions. The inevitable result of this poverty is malnutrition, resulting in low vitality, lack of resistance to disease, short life-period, huge infantile mortality. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, no mischievous agitator, repeated in 1905 the figures often quoted :

> Forty millions of people, according to one great Anglo-Indian authority—Sir William Hunter—pass through life with only one meal a day. According to another authority—Sir Charles Elliot—70 millions of people in India do not know what it is to have their hunger fully satisfied even once in the whole course of the year. The poverty of the people of India, thus considered by itself, is truly appalling. And if this is the state of things after a hundred years of your rule, you cannot claim that your principal aim in India has been the promotion of the interest of the Indian people.

It is sometimes said : "Why harp on these figures ? We know them." Our answer is that the fact is ever harping in the stomach of the people and while it continues, we cannot cease to draw attention to it. And Gokhale urged that "even this deplorable condition has been further deteriorating steadily." We have no figures on malnutrition among the peasantry but in Madras City, among an equally poor urban population, we found that 78 per cent. of our pupils were reported, after a medical inspection, to be suffering from malnutrition. And the spareness of frame, the thinness of arms and legs, the pitiably weak grip on life, speak without words to the seeing eye. It needs an extraordinary lack of imagination not to suffer while these things are going on.

The peasants' grievances are many and have been voiced year after year by this Congress. The Forest Laws made by legislators inappreciative of village difficulties press hardly on them, and only in a small number of places have Forest Panchayats been established. In the few cases in which the experiment has been made, the results have been good, in some cases marvellously good.

The paucity of grazing grounds for their cattle, the lack of green manure to feed their impoverished lands, the absence of fencing round forests, so that the cattle stray in when feeding, are impounded and have to be redeemed, the fines and other punishments imposed for offences ill-understood, the want of wood for fuel, for tools, for repairs, the uncertain distribution of the available water, all these troubles are discussed in villages and in local conferences. The Arms Act oppresses them, by leaving them defenceless against wild beasts and wild men. The union of Judicial and Executive functions makes justice often inaccessible and always costly both in money and in time. The village officials naturally care more to please the Tahsildar and the Collector than the villagers, to whom they are in no way responsible. And factions flourish, because there is always a third party to whom to resort, who may be flattered if his rank be high, bribed if it be low, whose favour can be gained in either case by cringing and by subservience and tale-bearing. As regards the condition of agriculture in India, and the poverty of the agricultural population, the Bureaucracy is inefficient.

The application of Mr. Gokhale's first test to Indian handicrafts, to the strengthening of weak industries and the creation of new, to the care of waterways for traffic and of the coast transport shipping, the protection of indigo and other indigenous dyes against their German synthetic rivals, etc., would shew similar answers. We are suffering now from the supineness of the Bureaucracy as regards the development of the resources of the country, by its careless indifference to the usurping by Germans of some of those resources, and even now they are pursuing a similar policy of *laissez faire* towards Japanese enterprise, which, leaning on its own Government, is taking the place of Germany in shouldering Indians out of their own natural heritage.

In all prosperous countries crafts are found side by side with agriculture, and they lend each other mutual support. The extreme poverty of Ireland, and the loss of more than half its population by emigration, were the direct results of the destruction of its wool industry by Great

Britain, and the consequent throwing of the population entirely on the land for subsistence. A similar phenomenon has resulted here from a similar cause, but on a far more widespread scale. And here, a novel and portentous change for India, "a considerable landless class is developing, which involves economic danger," as the *Imperial Gazetteer* remarks, comparing the census returns of 1891 and 1901. "The ordinary agricultural labourers are employed on the land only during the busy seasons of the year, and in slack times a few are attracted to large trade-centres for temporary work." One recalls the influx into England of Irish labourers at harvest time. Professor Radhakamal Mukerji has laid stress on the older conditions of village life; he says:

> The village is still almost self-sufficing and is in itself an economic unit. The village agriculturist grows all the food necessary for the inhabitants of the village The smith makes the ploughshares for the cultivator, and the few iron utensils required for the household. He supplies these to the people, but does not get money in return. He is recompensed by mutual services from his fellow villagers. The potter supplies him with pots, the weaver with cloth and the oilman with oil. From the cultivator each of these artisans receives his traditional share of grain. Thus almost all the economic transactions are carried on without the use of money. To the villagers money is only a store of value, not a medium of exchange. When they happen to be rich in money, they hoard it either in coins or make ornaments made of gold and silver.

These conditions are changing in consequence of the pressure of poverty driving the villagers to the city, where they learn to substitute the competition of the town for the mutual helpfulness of the village. The difference of feeling, the change from trustfulness to suspicion, may be seen by visiting villages which are in the vicinity of a town and comparing their villagers with those who inhabit villages in purely rural areas. This economic and moral deterioration can only be checked by the re-establishment of a healthy *and interesting* village life, and this depends upon the re-establishment of the Panchayat as the unit of government, a question which I deal with presently. Village industries would then revive and an intercommunicating network would be formed by

Co-operative Societies. Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar says in his pamphlet, *Co-operative Societies and Panchayats* :

The one method by which this evil [emigration to towns] can be arrested and the economic and social standards of life of the rural people elevated is by the inauguration of healthy Panchayats in conjunction with the foundation of Co-operative institutions, which will have the effect of resuscitating village industries and of creating organised social forces. The Indian village, when rightly reconstructed, would be an excellent foundation for well-developed co-operative industrial organisation.

Again :

The resuscitation of the village system has other bearings, not usually considered in connection with the general subject of the inauguration of the Panchayat system. One of the most important of these is the regeneration of the small industries of the land. Both in Europe and in India the decline of small industries has gone on *pari passu* with the decline of forming on a small scale. In countries like France agriculture has largely supported village industries, and small cultivators in that country have turned their attention to industry as a supplementary source of livelihood. The decline of village life in India is not only a political but also an economic and industrial problem. Whereas in Europe the cultural impulse has travelled from the city to the village, in India the reverse has been the case. The centre of social life in this country is the village, and not the town. Ours was essentially the cottage industry, and our artisans still work in their own huts, more or less out of touch with the commercial world. Throughout the world the tendency has been of late to lay considerable emphasis on distributive and industrial co-operation, based on a system of village industries and enterprise. Herein would be found the origins of the arts and crafts guilds and the garden cities, the idea underlying all these being to inaugurate a reign of Socialism and Co-operation, eradicating the entirely unequal distribution of wealth amongst producers and consumers. India has always been a country of small tenantry, and has thereby escaped many of the evils the western nations have experienced owing to the concentration of wealth in a few hands. The communistic sense in our midst, and the fundamental tenets of our family life have checked such concentration of capital. This has been the cause for the non-development of factory industries on a large scale.

The need for these changes—to which England is returning, after full experience of the miseries of life in manufacturing towns—is pressing.

Addressing an English audience, G. K. Gokhale summed up the general state of India as follows:

Your average annual income has been estimated at about £42 per head. Ours, according to official estimates, is about £2 per head, and according to non-official estimates, only a little more than £1 per head. Your imports per head are about £13; ours about 5s. per head. The total deposits in your Postal Savings Bank amount to 148 million sterling, and you have in addition in the Trustees' Savings Banks about 52 million sterling. Our Postal Savings Bank deposits, with a population seven times as large as yours, are only about 7 million sterling, and even of this a little over one-tenth is held by Europeans. Your total paid-up capital of joint-stock companies is about 1,900 million sterling. Ours is not quite 26 million sterling and the greater part of this again is European. Four-fifths of our people are dependent upon agriculture, and agriculture has been for some time steadily deteriorating. Indian agriculturists are too poor, and are, moreover, too heavily indebted, to be able to apply any capital to land, and the result is that over the greater part of India agriculture is, as Sir James Caird pointed out more than twenty-five years ago, only a process of exhaustion of the soil. The yield per acre is steadily diminishing, being now only about 8 to 9 bushels an acre against about 30 bushels here in England.

In all the matters which come under Gokhale's first test, the Bureaucracy has been and is inefficient.

(f) Give Indians a Chance.

All we say in the matter is: You have not succeeded in bringing education, health, prosperity, to the masses of the people. Is it not time to give Indians a chance of doing, for their own country work similar to that which Japan and other Nations have done for theirs? Surely the claim is not unreasonable. If the Anglo-Indians say that the masses are their peculiar trust and that the educated classes care not for them, but only for place and power, then we point to the Congress, to the speeches and the resolutions eloquent of their love and their knowledge. It is not their fault that they gaze on their country's poverty in helpless despair. Or let Mr. Justice Rahim answer:

As for the representation of the interests of the many scores of millions in India, if the claim be that they are better represented by European Officials than by educated Indian Officials or non-Officials, it is difficult to conceive how such reckless claim has come

to be urged. The inability of English Officials to master the spoken languages of India, and their habits of life and modes of thought so completely divide them from the general population, that only an extremely limited few, possessed with extraordinary powers of insight, have ever been able to surmount the barriers. With the educated Indians, on the other hand, this knowledge is instinctive, and the view of religion and custom, so strong in the East, make their knowledge and sympathy more real than is to be seen in countries dominated by materialistic conceptions.

And it must be remembered that it is not lack of ability which has brought about bureaucratic inefficiency, for British traders and producers have done uncommonly well for themselves in India. But a Bureaucracy does not trouble itself about matters of this kind; the Russian Bureaucracy did not concern itself with the happiness of the Russian masses, but with their obedience and their paying of taxes. Bureaucracies are the same everywhere, and therefore it is the system we wage war upon, not the men; we do not want to substitute Indian bureaucrats for British bureaucrats; we want to abolish Bureaucracy, Government by Civil Servants.

(*g*) *The other Tests applied.*

I need not delay over the second, third and fourth tests, for the answers *sautent aux yeux.*

The second test, Local Self-Government: Under Lord Mayo (1869-72) some attempts were made at decentralisation, called by Keene "Home Rule" (!) and his policy was followed, on non-financial lines, as well by Lord Ripon, who tried to infuse into what Keene calls "the germs of Home Rule," "the breath of life". Now in 1917, an experimental and limited measure of local Home Rule is to be tried in Bengal. Though the Report of the Decentralisation Committee was published in 1909, we have not yet arrived at the universal election of non-official Chairmen. Decidedly inefficient is the Bureaucracy under test 2.

The third test, a Voice in the Councils: The part played by Indian elected members in the Legislative Council, Madras, was lately described by a member as "a

farce." The Supreme Legislative Council was called by one of its members "a glorified Debating Society". A table of resolutions proposed by Indian elected members, and passed or lost, was lately drawn up, justified the caustic epithets. With regard to the Minto-Morley reforms, the Bureaucracy showed great efficiency in destroying the benefits intended by the Parliamentary Statute. But the third test shows that in giving Indians a fair voice in the Councils, the Bureaucracy was inefficient.

The fourth test, the Admission of Indians to the Public Services : This is shown, by the Report of the Commission, not to need any destructive activity on the part of the Bureaucracy to prove their unwillingness to pass it, for the Report protects them in their privileged position.

We may add to Gokhale's tests one more which will be triumphantly passed, the success of the Bureaucracy in increasing the cost of administration. The estimates for the revenue of the present year stand at £ 86,199,600 sterling. The expenditure is reckoned at £ 85,572,100 sterling. The cost of administration stands at more than half the total revenue :

Civil Departments Salaries and Expenses ...	£ 19,323,300
Miscellaneous Charges	£ 5,283,300
Military Services	£ 23,165,900
	£ 47,772,500

The reduction of the abnormal cost of government in India is of the most pressing nature, but this will never be done until we win Home Rule.

It will be seen that the secondary reasons for the demand for Home Rule are of the weightiest nature in themselves, and show the necessity for its grant if India is to escape from a poverty which threatens to lead to National bankruptcy, as if it has already led to a short life-period and a high death rate, to wide-spread disease, and to a growing exhaustion of the soil. That some radical change must be brought about in the condition of our masses, if a

Revolution of Hunger is to be averted, is patent to all students of history, who also know the poverty of the Indian masses to-day. This economic condition is due to many causes, of which the inevitable lack of understanding by an alien Government is only one. A system of Government suitable to the West was forced on the East, destroying its own democratic and communal institutions, and imposing bureaucratic methods which bewildered and deteriorated a people to whom they were strange and repellent. The result is not a matter for recrimination, but for change. An inappropriate system, forced on an already highly civilized people was bound to fail. It has been rightly said that the poor only revolt, when the misery they are enduring is greater than the dangers of revolt. We need Home Rule to stop the daily suffering of our millions from the diminishing yield of the soil and the decay of village industries.

Administrative Reforms

These fall under the heads of:

(1) Reforms in the Government of India.
(2) Reforms in the Government of Provinces.
(3) Reforms in Local Self-Government.

I prefer to take these in reverse order, building up the scheme of Government from its foundation, so that it may appear as a coherent whole, its parts interdependent. But I will say at the outset, to preclude mistake, that no scheme of Local Self-Government can succeed, unless the changes asked for last year in the Congress-League scheme are granted. That scheme is our irreducible minimum for Reforms worthy of the name. The long and futile tinkering at Local Self-Government since the days of Lord Ripon has conclusively proved that you can no more have a reality of Local Self-Government with unrepresentative Provincial Legislative Councils, or with such Councils as we have now—save in Bengal—with an official and nominated majority of members, with a complete British Executive, or four to one British majority-Executive, in which the solitary Indian member lends cover to

objectionable measures which he is powerless to prevent, than you could have a healthy body with a disease of undeveloped brain. Healthy brain, directing and controlling, must go with a healthy body. A foreign Executive, distrustful of Indian capacity to govern, busies itself more with official checks and controls than with the powers of the local membership. We are tired of this grandmotherly legislation. If the Anglo-Indians think us babies—very well. Let the babies crawl by themselves, get up and try to walk and then tumble down, until by tumbles they learn equilibrium. If they learn to walk in leading strings they will always develop bow-legs. But let me remark, in passing, that wherever the Indians have been tried fairly, they have always succeeded. If the Government of India and Great Britain, under official pressure, begin with Local Self-Government, and demand success in that department—or in any departments before they agree to the Congress-League scheme, at last—it means that they are marking time and are not making any real step forward. And let me say to the Governments of India and Britain, with all frankness and good will, that India is demanding her Rights, and is not begging for concessions. It is for her to say with what she will be satisfied—I appeal to the statement of the Premier of Great Britain, in support of my assertion—and not for any other authority to say to her: "Thus far, and no further." In this attitude, the Democracy of Great Britain supports us; the Allies, fighting, as Mr. Asquith said, "for nothing short of freedom support us; the great Republic of the United States of America supports us. Britain cannot deny her own traditions, contradict her own leading statesmen, and shame the free Commonwealth, of which she is the glorious Head in the face of the world."

UNFIT FOR DEMOCRACY?

We have been assured time after time, even to weariness, that India is totally unfit for Democratic institutions, having always lived under absolute rule of sorts. But that is not the opinion of historians, based

on facts, though it may be the opinion of the Indian Civil Service, based on prejudices. As well said, in the Address presented to H. E. the Viceroy and the Rt. Hon. Mr. Montagu by the Home Rule Leagues:

The argument that Democracy is foreign to India cannot be alleged by any well-informed person. Maine and other historians recognise the fact that Democratic Institutions are essentially Aryan, and spread from India to Europe with the immigration of Aryan peoples. Panchayats, the "village republics," had been the most stable institution of India, and only vanished during the last century under the pressure of the East India Company's domination. They still exist within the castes, each caste forming within itself a thorough democracy, in which the same man may have as relations a prince and a peasant. Social rank does not depend so much on wealth and titles, as on learning and occupation. India is democratic in spirit, and in institutions left to her from the past and under her control in the present.

We have further the testimony of eminent Englishmen. Sir John Lawrence said as long ago as 1864:

The people of India are quite capable of administering their own affairs, and the municipal feeling is deeply rooted in them. The village communities, each of which is a little republic, are the most abiding of Indian institutions. Holding the position we do in India, every view of duty and policy should induce us to leave as much as possible of the business of the country to be done by the people.

Sir Bartle Frere, in 1872, wrote:

Any one who has watched the working of Indian society will see that its genius is one to represent, not merely by election under Reform Acts but represent generally by provisions, every class of the community, and when there is any difficulty respecting any matter to be laid before Government, it should be discussed among themselves. When there is any fellow-citizen to be rewarded or punished, there is always a caste meeting, and this is an expression, it seem to me, of the genius of the people, as it was of the old Saxons! to gather together in assemblies of different types to vote by tribes or hundreds.

As Mr. Chisholm Anstey said:

We are apt to forget in this country, when we talk of preparing people in the East by education, and all that sort of thing, for Municipal Government and Parliamentary Government (if I may use such a term), that the East is the parent of Municipalities. Local Self-Government, in the widest acceptation of

the term, is as old as the East itself. No matter what may be the religion of the people who inhabit what we call the East, there is not a portion of the country from west to east, from north to south, which is not swarming with municipalities, and not only so, but like to our municipalities of old, they are all bound together as in a species of network, so that you have ready-made to your hand the framework of a great system or representation.

I might multiply these quotations, but to what end? The wise know them, the other-wise will not accept them, pipe we ever so forcefully.

With these prefatory remarks, I proceed to consider the

REFORMS IN LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

(*a*) *General principles.*

We have three extending areas to consider: (1) the village; (2) the Group of Villages, each separated from others by larger or smaller spaces of land; this group *plus* the intervening lands forms the second area of control; (3) the District consisting of conterminous Taluqs or Tahsils, for the most part, but also of tracts of waste and forest lands owned by the Government.

There is an interesting reminiscence in this of the ancient grouping; there was a headman over a village; a higher grade of headman over a group of ten villages; a higher yet over one hundred villages, and so on in multiples of ten. The ancient liked this regular ascending scale; they liked to see orderly theories.

In the village, the electorate should be its resident householders, whether owners or occupiers, "that that which concerns all may be judged by all." This gives to the man or woman resident a voice in the country, but the direct power is limited to electing representatives to deal with the questions immediately affecting the voter, while indirectly he reaches up through the higher grades to the governing of the whole country. Later, as education and experience spread, universal suffrage will elect our Legislative Councils, supreme and local. We take a leaf from England's book, and do not at first give the direct suffrage to the labourers except for the local Council. We

make the electorate for the Provincial Legislative Council conterminous with the electorate of Taluq Boards.

We then distribute duties and powers on the principle that whatever belongs to the village exclusively should be controlled by the village Council, while where a village institution is a fragment of a larger whole, the whole should be planned by the Council in the area of whose authority the whole exists, and the village fragment be assigned to it by the higher Council to whom the Village Council should be responsible for its management of its own fragment. Let us take a School as illustration and suppose that the educational scheme for the Province should be planned out by the Education Department of the Provincial Government, and sanctioned by the Provincial Council; it would include Provincial University or Universities, Colleges, High Schools, Secondary Schools, Primary Schools, each with its manual training institute of similar grade attached to it, and these having divisions for general manual training, and the closer instruction of the workshops for those learning a trade as a means of livelihood. Every village would have its Elementary School, with the workshops needed in that particular village for the trades practised therein; probably there would be a Secondary School in every Firka (Revenue Circle); at least one High School in every Taluq, and in most Taluqs more than one; a College, or more, in each District; one or more Universities for the Province. But the Village Panchayat would be responsible only for its own Elementary School, and for seeing that any promising boy or girl should be sent on to the Firka Secondary School. By this the School would be linked on to the larger life beyond the village; but its own control would be only over its own School, seeing that its share of the Provincial Education was carried out.

(b) The Panchayat.

The existence of Village Communities in India from time immemorial with a considerable amount of organisation, is a matter of common knowledge, and in some parts of the

country many inscriptions and records have been discovered which enable us to reconstruct the village life which continued in the south of India to the last century, and in Burma to our own time. It received its death blow by Sir Thomas Munro's individualistic raiyatwari scheme, and has been loosing vitality since 1820. Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, in the pamphlet before quoted, remarks:—

> In Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, Book III, Vol. 10, villagers are contemplated as constructing and maintaining in their corporate capacity works of public utility; and Professor Rhys Davids says: "Villagers are discribed in the Buddhist books as uniting all their care to build mohallas and rest-houses, to mend the roads between their own and adjacent villages, and even to lay out parks." (*Vide* P. Bannerji's *Public Administration in Ancient India*, 293, note 2.) In Mysore, now, in many districts, the villagers give half a day's work free, per week, for works of public utility and the aggregate value of the work done is astounding. Every village in the times of the *Arthashastra* (14th century B.C.) formed an integral part of the general administrative system and the village was the foundation of the governmental edifice. The village government of those days partook not only of the administration of executive, but also of judiciary functions, as will appear from the Ceylon inscriptions dealing with the administration of criminal justice of communal courts. To the credit of the Madras Government it must be said that, as against Sir T. Munro, who was a thorough individualist, the Madras Board of Revenue desired in the early years of the last century to have the authority of the village institutions unimpaired but Sir Thomas Munro had his way, and the village communities lost their vitality.

The last Administration Report of Mysore (1915-16) says (p. 278) on "The Village Improvement Scheme," that "the villagers contributed Rs. 47,083 either in cash or in labour" during the year, the Government helping with grants amounting to Rs. 44,978. It says:

> The village committees continued to evince much interest in this work, and many works of public utility, such as construction of school buildings, sinking wells and opening roads, clearing lantana and planting trees, were carried out through their exertions throughout the State.

Conferences of the village committees were held in four districts, "to take stock of the work done by the committees, to discuss the needs and requirements of the rural population, and to concert measures and draw up

programmes for improving the economic and sanitary condition of the villages." The villagers fell in gladly with this communal work which is on their traditional lines, giving definite amounts of free labour, as stated above, to the improvement of their village. The old sense of communal obligation still survives, and the Mysore Government had wisely utilised and fostered it.

The characteristics of the village were a group of houses surrounded by a large tract of land, arable and pasture; each resident had a site free of rent for house, yard and garden. The establishment consisted of the officers and craftsmen, whose services were free to all, and who were given land, and various other rights to shares of produce, as remuneration. These consisted of a headman, an accountant, a watchman who also discharged some police functions, a boundary man, a superintendent of tanks and watercourses, a pujari, a schoolmaster, an astrologer, a doctor, a musician, a poet, a dancing girl, a barber, a washerman, a cow-keeper, a potter, a smith and a carpenter. The village assembly governed, elected by "pot-tickets," and formed committees for branches of work; the land was communal property and re-distributed from time to time. All householders appear to have had votes, but certain qualifications were laid down for eligibility for election as a Pancha (Councillor).

In the Report of the Decentralisation Committee appointed in 1907 by Edward VII—composed of five Englishmen and one Indian, Romesh Chander Dutt—Part III, Chap. XVIII, § 694, we read:

> Throughout the greater part of India, the village constitutes the primary territorial unit of Government organisation, and from the villages are built up larger administrative entities.

The village is described from the *Gazetteer*, as above, from older sources, with its "customary rules and its little staff of functionaries, artisans and traders." These villages, says the Report, "formerly possessed a large degree of a local autonomy," but

> this autonomy has now disappeared owing to the establishment of local, civil and criminal courts, the present revenue and police

organisation, the increase of communication, the growth of individualism, and the operation of the individual raiyatwari system which is extending even in the north of India. Nevertheless the village remains the first unit of administration, the principal village functionaries—the headman, the accountant and the village watchman—are largely utilised and paid by Government, and there is still a certain amount of common village feeling and interests.

"Paid by Government"—those three words explain the killing of the old village system. The officials became the servants of a higher official—Sub-Tahsildar, Tahsildar, Deputy Collector or Collector—looking to him for favour and reward, not to the villagers. Thus they became village tyrants instead of village servants, and the Soul of the village, the responsibility to one's brother-villagers, died.

It is admitted that the village communities have disintegrated under British administration, but the Report urges their re-establishment. It seems that some witnesses doubted "whether the people are sufficiently advanced in education and independence for any measure of village autonomy"; there speaks the spirit of the bureaucrat. The villages had been autonomous for thousands of years; invasions, changes of Rule, lapse of time, had left them active; a century and a half of British rule had made them unfit, in this witness's mind, to manage their own affairs. Why this strange deterioration under a rule supposed to be uplifting? Because, on the Procrustes-bed of Bureaucracy, all that did not fit it had to be chopped off; the villagers had their own ways, which had served them well, but they were not the Collector's ways, so they were bad. Only Home Rule will re-integrate Village Government.

However, the Report desires the development of a Panchayat system, and says (S. 736):

> We consider that as Local Self-Government should commence in the villages with the establishment of Village Panchayats, so the next step should be the constitution of boards for areas of smaller size than a district. We desire, therefore, to see sub-district boards universally established as the principal agencies of rural board associations.

Unhappily it adds to its recommendation a condition which however well meant, would ensure its being still-born

as a dead failure. For it is essential, says the Report, that the Panchayat movement

should be completely under the eye and hands of the district authorities. Supervision of affairs in the villages is, and should remain, one of the main functions of Tahsildars and Sub-Divisional Officers.

Tie up a baby's arms and legs, and then leave it to teach itself to walk. If it does not succeed, blame the baby. The free baby will learn equilibrium through tumbles; the tied-up baby will become paralysed, and will never walk.

I hope that our Secretary of State will establish Panchayats by an Act based on the admirable one drawn up by the Hon. Mr. T Rangachariar, that he tried vainly to introduce in the Madras Legislative Council. I have handed it to him with Mr. Rangachariar's careful and weighty monograph, and it may be that the rejected of Madras may be the accepted of Westminster.

I may quote here, on the establishment of Panchayats, what I have said elsewhere:

Village needs would thus be made known, and if necessary they could be represented by the Panchayat to a higher authority. The village would become articulate through its Panchayat, and would no longer be the dumb and often driven creature which it is to-day. And it would be brought into touch with the larger life. The Panchayat might invite lecturers, organise discussions, arrange amusements, games, etc. All village life would be lifted to a higher level, widened and enriched by such organisation, and each village, further, forming one of a group of villages, would realise its unity with others, and thus become an organ of the larger corporate life.

The corresponding unit in the Towns to the Village in the country is the Ward, and the Ward Panchayat, like the Village one, should be elected by Household Suffrage. All towns with populations over 5,000 should have Ward Panchayats under control of the Municipality. Below that population, a Ward Panchayat would be the only municipal

authority. These Ward Councils should take up the smaller town matters, now neglected because the Municipality is too heavily burdened to attend to them properly. The Elementary Schools in each Ward should be in its charge; scavenging and sanitation generally, and care for the cleanliness of the streets and latrines; provision and superintendence of stands for hire vehicles and resting carts, with water-troughs for horses and cattle; the inspection of foodstuffs and prevention of adulteration; arbitration in small disputes as in France—where so much litigation is prevented by the appointment of a small tradesman as a local judge—inspection of workshops, wells, etc.—all these matters would naturally fall into the hands of the Ward Councils. Where there is a Municipality, that body would delegate to the Ward Council such matters as it thought fit.

(*c*) *The Taluq or Tahsil Board.*

The next rung in the ladder of Local Self-Government will be the body intermediate between the Panchayat and the District Board; the name will vary in different Provinces. With us in Madras, the Presidency is divided into 26 Districts and these into 96 Taluqs; for general purposes these may, if preferred, be termed Sub-Districts, the name used in the Decentralisation Commission Report. But the Taluq, or its corresponding division outside Madras, should be the area controlled by the Board. The Report calls them Sub-District Boards, but itself suggests the better name of Taluq or Tahsil, taking these definite areas, already existing, as the area of control for the Boards intermediate between Panchayats and District Board. In each of these there should be a Board, its electorate consisting of the Panchayats in its area, and of all persons now qualified to vote in Firkas; the qualification is only a property one and may be amended later. The Panchas would thus have a second vote, earned by public service, and would have their special representatives on the Taluq Board, each representing his own village's common interests. The Decentralisation Report strongly urges that these Boards should form an essential part of the scheme

of Local Self-Government, with adequate resources and a large measure of independence.

Their functions should include control of Secondary and High Schools, with Model Farms in rural, and Technical Institutes in urban areas. Inter village roads and their lighting where necessary, water-ways and irrigation channels outside villages, but within the Taluq, should be under their care. They should form Co-operative Societies, and where these are not established, they should hold agricultural machinery for hiring to villagers, establish granaries for storage of grain, dairy-farms, with stud-bulls to be hired to villagers, breeding stables for horses, and generally they should organise industry wherever Co-operative Societies are not available.

(d) District Boards.

Some of our political reformers would abolish District Boards. As at present advised, I prefer to keep them.

This third grade upwards of Local Self-Government consists of the District Boards in the country and Municipalities in the larger towns. The electorate of the District Board should be the Taluq Boards under its jurisdiction, and the general Taluq electorate. This gives every Taluq Board member a second vote, as in the case of Panchas, deserved by public work.

Their functions would be to discharge all the duties which affect the District as a whole, to supervise the Taluq Boards, and to decide any appeals by Panchayats from a Taluq Board decision. They would assign the proportion of local taxation to be raised in each Taluq, and the grants to be made to each from the grant received from the Provincial Council for the District. They would appoint the necessary District Officers, such as the Engineer for the District Public Works Department, the Inspector of Secondary and High Schools in the Taluqs, the Sanitary Inspector, etc., Public roads, local railways and and waterways would be under their inspection. The District Town would include the usual District Buildings,

and the District Colleges for Arts, Science, Agriculture, Industries, Crafts.

Even in Lord Ripon's time there was a feeble organisation making for self-government. Keene remarks:

> The germs of Home Rule already existed not only in the traditional institutions of the rural communes so often described but in towns and cities where—in whatever leading strings—local bodies regulated the conservancy and the watch-and-ward of the streets.

Slow as progress has been, yet some progress has been made, and when these Boards are wholly elective, have elected chairmen, and real power over their own areas, the progress will be rapid. When Local Self-Government is established as an essential part of Home Rule, we shall see the Village Panchayat abolishing such degrading punishments as the stocks and flogging, and the villagers will be treated as free men, worthy of respect. Moreover agriculture will be taught at convenient centres, and model farms will be established both for training and experiment. Mysore has three such farms. The raiyats will be helped to improve methods of cultivation, suitable manures, and clean seed of the best kinds. The Forest Laws will be modified and the ancient fashion of rings of grazing ground will be provided for their cattle. In Mysore, "the major portions of the forests were thrown open," says the last Report, "for the grazing of cattle of all descriptions, except goats." Panchayats will supervise village schools suitable to the circumstances of the village, and training for adult raiyats willing to learn, while Taluq Boards will, as suggested, arrange for the provision of stud-bulls, grain-storage, agricultural machinery, etc., at reasonable terms for hire. Boys of bright intelligence will have the opportunity, through scholarships, of rising through Schools to College or of good agricultural or industrial or craft training. These things are not dreams, but things done in other civilised countries, where the people have Home Rule. In the Educational Rescript of the Emperor of Japan, published in 1872, he directed that "henceforth Education

shall be so diffused that there may not be a village with an ignorant family, nor a family with an ignorant member". Twenty-four years later, as we have seen, 92 per cent. of the Japanese children of school-going age were in school. Why should not Indians do as well as Japanese, when here also Education is controlled by men of their own race? For it must not be forgotten that the educated class is rooted in their ancestral villages, and many relatives of Vakils are raiyats. Despite the caste-system, there is much more blending of classes here than in the West, and the village and town populations are closely interrelated. The bright boy of a raiyat's family becomes a Vakil, while the duller remains a raiyat. This keen sympathy has been shown in the earnest but futile resolutions of the Congress from its second session onwards, and when we have Home Rule the resolutions will become operative.

(*e*) *Local Government Board.*

The Local Government system must have at its head a Local Government Board, and its functions must be defined by an Act of the Provincial Legislative Council, on the lines of the Local Government Board Act of 1871, and the subsequent cognate enactments, as proposed in the address of the Home Rule Leagues presented last month in Delhi. The remarks of the Royal Sanitary Commission in England in 1879 are very apposite here, though naturally spoken there, under the circumstances of the need of a central sanitary officer:

> One recognised and sufficiently powerful Minister, not to centralise administration, but on the contrary, to set local life in motion—a real motive power, and an authority to be referred to for assistance and guidance by all the sanitary authorities for Local Government throughout the country.

The Commissioners go on to describe the difficulties besetting Local Government in England, in words which recall the despairing remarks of our Municipal President in Madras:

Great is the *vis inertiæ* to be overcome; the repugnance to self-taxation; the practical distrust of science; and the number of persons interested in offending against sanitary laws, even amongst those who must constitute chiefly the local authorities to enforce them.

Thus difficulties are alleged by Englishmen in India as reasons for withholding complete local Self-Government, and for making timid experiments that may continue for centuries. Englishmen in England, face to face with similar difficulties, find in them only reasons for setting "local life in motion".

The object of the English Act was

to concentrate in one department of the Government the supervision of the laws relating to public health, the relief of the poor and Local Government.

The Board is composed of unpaid members who do nothing—the Lord President of the Council, all the Secretaries of State, the Lord Privy Seal and the Chancellor of the Exchequer—a most august and reverend body. All the Board is empowered to do can be done, and is so done, by the President of the Board, who sits in Parliament, is generally a Cabinet Minister, and has a salary of £2,600 a year. He has a Permanent Secretary with five Assistants, a Legal Adviser, a Chief Engineering Inspector, a Chief Medical Officer, with a staff of medical inspectors, architects and engineers, with the "ordinary staff of a Government Office". If under our scheme of the Executive Council, an Indian member was the President of the Local Government, omitting the ornamental Board, it might suffice.

The "growth of the Functions of the Board" is indicated by its absorption of the duties of the Poor Law Commissioners and Poor Law Board by 41 Acts of Parliament between 1835 and 1870, and by 154 Acts between 1871 and 1907, both inclusive. The legal authority states that the lists are probably "not exhaustive". They suffice. On Regulations, Orders, Bye-Law, *et hoc genus omne*, I do not dare to enter. The President of our Board, when appointed, may study them.

Provincial Legislative Council and Supreme Legislative Council

The Scheme of the National Congress and the All-India Muslim League has been before the country for a year, and has been presented to the Viceroy and the Secretary of State for India. I do not discuss it here, as it has been fully discussed, from all points of view, during the past two years. We have all worked for it, honestly and zealously, confining ourselves within its four corners. We have now to remember that we have the duty of helping the country to work under it during the transitional period for which it was designed—differing in this from the *Memorandum of the Nineteen*, which was suggested as containing Post-War Reforms. The Congress-League scheme was, professedly, a bridge, leading from the present condition to that considered in the third part of last year's Congress Resolution.

> That, in the Reconstruction of the Empire, India shall be lifted from the position of a Dependency to that of an equal partner in the Empire with the Self-Governing Dominions.

That now becomes our objective. We must continue to agitate for the Congress Scheme until it is passed. The final scheme will, of course, include the place of the Indian States under completed Self-Government, and of the representation of India in the Central Imperial Council or Parliament, or Cabinet—questions which were deliberately left out of our transitional scheme.

On the general question of the work of the Provincial Legislative Councils, I may perhaps say that it will be their duty to make grants to District Boards which, in turn, will distribute them to the Taluq and Village Boards in their area. No interference with their use of grants should be made, save where palpable irregularities justify the interference of the Local Government President. Freedom to work and to blunder—to a non-ruinous extent—must be allowed if Local Self-Government is to become a reality.

Another large portion of their work will be the fostering of industries in their Provinces, and the helping of the District Boards by experiments of general utility, so as to prevent useless reduplications of research. Thus, in Mysore, experiments were carried on with respect to ragi, paddy, sugar-cane, ground-nut, areca-nut and cotton, useful to the whole State. Demonstrations in the use of machinery and apparatus—churns, ploughs, seed drills, etc., would probably be conducted best by Provincial officers. So also demonstrations of improved methods of jaggery-making, of preservation of cattle-manure, that, in Mysore, were attended by gatherings of raiyats. Lectures and distribution of vernacular literature were also carried on there. Six new kinds of ploughs were introduced, and sold by the hire-purchase system. Mineral and chemical analyses, mycological and entomological research are also best carried on at a well equipped Central Institute. But these divisions will be settled by experience. It is good to read that, in Mysore, the raiyats warmly welcomed the instruction offered.

I mention these facts in order to show something of what is being done by Indians for Indians in an Indian State. It may re-assure the timid, and make them feel that Home Rule implies prosperity and not catastrophe.

SELF-GOVERNMENT BY COMPARTMENTS

Lately, a new scheme has been sprung on the country, after careful preliminary notices and hints in the Anglo-Indian Press. It is known as "Self-Government by compartments." It is eagerly snatched at by the Europeans, and creates a double set of authorities, one on the present lines, irresponsible to the people and with control of the purse, in which all real power is vested; the other a simulacrum, or wraith, of a responsible Ministry and an elected Assembly, ruling a department, or departments, of the Government, to be given more power if the real Government approve of them, to be deprived of power if the real Government disapprove of them. The real Government can ensure their failure, by giving them such

important departments as Education and Sanitation, which need a very heavy outlay, and restricting the funds allowed to them on the plea of necessity. They can then be dismissed with contumely as incompetent. The lesson of Local Government should be laid to heart, for that has been a trial of a similar system, in which officials have played the part of the real Government in the new scheme. Or the real Government may give them unimportant departments on which to try their prentice hands, so that failure may not matter, and the country will be indifferent to them. There are many other objections to the scheme, which is verily the giving of a stone for bread. But the root objection is that it keeps India entirely subordinate, when she demands Self-Government. It breathes the deep distrust of Indian capacity, characteristic of the Bureaucracy, and makes the preposterous claim that India is to remain in leading strings because another Nation claims the right to rule her, and to give her crumbs of freedom from its own well-spread table. It is the negation of every principle which Britain and her Allies have proclaimed in the face of the world. The Congress has asked for a definite scheme of Reforms; it can be satisfied with nothing less than the adoption of their essential principles. We may ask for more; we cannot ask for less. Nations go forward, not backward, in their struggle for Freedom.

DEPUTATION

If, as I suppose, you will send a Deputation to England, to discuss the actual Statute which will have to be passed in Parliament to give effect to the Scheme, you would do well to give them a mandate to stand unflinchingly by the essential principles of the scheme: the substantial majority in the Supreme and Provincial Legislative Councils, and the power of the purse. If these are not granted, further discussion is useless; if they are, then we can discuss subsidiary matters.

If such a Deputation be sent, we must agitate strongly and steadily here in support of it. It is said that the battle

of India is to be fought in Britain. In the sense that we must put our demands clearly before Britain, that is true. But the real battle must be fought here, for Britain will naturally limit her legislation to that which India strongly demands. The great Labour Party will help us with its votes, but we must show, by our attitude here, that we are determined to win our Freedom.

VERNACULAR

There is also much work to do in helping the people to prepare themselves for the new powers which will be placed in their hands. And for this, the work must be done in the vernaculars of each Province, as only by their mother-tongue can the heart and brain of the masses be reached.

Sooner or later, preferably sooner, Province will have to be re-delimited on a linguistic basis. The official languages, for a time, will have to be two: the Vernacular and English, as in some parts of Canada, French and English are used. Only then will the masses be able to take their full share in public life.

THE NEW OBJECTIVE

What is to be our new objective?

We have to formulate a scheme to carry out the third part of the Congress Resolution; we can do this only so far as British India is concerned: (i) The place of the Indian States will have to be considered by the United Kingdom in the light of the treaties existing between the Paramount Power and the Princes. So far as British India is concerned, we have to see that no arrangement is come to affecting it, which admits to any voice in our Councils any Prince who retains absolute power within his own State, or who is not ruling on lines similar to those adopted within British India. Nor must any have authority *in* British India, which is not also possessed over his State *by* British India. (ii) With regard to any Central Imperial Authority, whatever it may be, India must have a position commensurate with her importance in the Empire,

otherwise she will be ruled by the United Kingdom and the Dominions in all Imperial matters, and may be turned into a plantation, with her industrial development strangled. If, as is suggested, the War Council should evolve into the Central Authority, then its powers should be confined to questions of Imperial Defence. No other questions should be introduced without being referred to the Self-Governing Nations composing the Empire, and if one Nation objects to it, the question must remain excluded. Each such Nation must exercise complete control over its own tariff and fiscus—as indeed the present Dominions now exercise it—subject to a charge for Imperial Defence.

The visit to India of the Indian Secretary of State makes it necessary that we should formulate very definitely what we demand, for it is now clear the legislation is on the anvil and we must take Mr. Bonar Law's advice to strike while the iron is hot.

With regard to our new objective, I suggest that we should ask the British Government to pass a Bill during 1918 establishing Self-Government in India on lines resembling those of the Commonwealth of Australia, the Act to come into force at a date to be laid down therein, preferably 1923, at the latest 1928, the intermediate five or ten years being occupied with the transference of the Government from British to Indian hands, maintaining the British tie as in the Dominions.

The transference may be made in stages, beginning with some such scheme as that of the Congress-League, with its widened electorate, the essentials being half the Executive Councils elected by the elected members of the legislatures, control of the purse, and a substantial majority in the Supreme and Provincial Councils.

We asked first for representation, which was supposed to give influence; this has proved to mean nothing. Now we ask for a partnership in the governing of India; the Governments have the power of dissolution and the veto; the people have the power of the purse; that is the second stage, a partnership of equals—co-operation. The third

step will be that of complete Home Rule, to come automatically in 1923, or 1928.

We look with confidence to the All-India Muslim League to assist us in this work.

The suggested lines are :

(i) That all Legislative Councils shall be wholly elected.

(ii) That members of the Public Services shall be included in the electorate, but shall not be eligible for election, nor shall they, while holding places of profit under the Crown, take part in political controversies. This rule does not include retired members, even though pensioned.

(iii) The Legislative Bodies, Supreme and Provincial, shall be unicameral.

(iv) The Prerogative of the Crown including the appointment of its Privy Councillors, the Governor-General and the Governors, while exercising that right with the approval of the Secretary of State for India, shall also call upon a member of the Legislative Council to form a Ministry, the members of which shall be sworn in as Privy Councillors, but who shall be removable by a vote of want of confidence passed in the Legislature.

(v) The Indian Army and Navy, for Indian Defence, shall be under the control of the Viceroy as the representative of the Crown, and shall be supported out of the revenues of India. The contribution of India to Imperial Defence shall be adjusted between the Government of India and the War Council.

(vi) The formation, regulation and encouragement of the Mercantile Marine shall vest in the Government of India, subject to such international regulations as may be agreed upon after the War.

With regard to iii, iv, and v, I may add :

(iii) Much discussion will arise on this proposal, but it is submitted that the great variety of interests of opinions

in India of themselves render hasty legislation—the checking of which is supposed to be the function of a second Chamber—unlikely. The power of the Governor to dissolve the Council, inherent in the prerogative, with the power of veto, gives sufficient check in a country so conservative as India.

(iv) In the United Kingdom, the Cabinet has no statutory basis. The King in Council theoretically rules, *i.e.*, the King and his Privy Councillors. But the ignorance of George II of the English language caused him to retire from the presidency of the Council, and the Cabinet grew up. Every member of the Cabinet is sworn in as a Privy Councillor, and when the Cabinet falls, its members remain Privy Councilors, but only attend when summoned on great State occasions. We have to respect the rights of the Crown, while at the same time, we create the responsibility of Ministers to the Legislature.

(v) "Indian Army" means an Army composed of Indians and officered by Indians, and does not include the British soldiers now employed here. Thus the country will be relieved of the relatively huge cost now incurred for the short service system, transport depots and recruiting in England, and the like. The Indian Army will be composed of Territorials and large Reserves.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

The year 1917 will ever remain memorable in Indian history for the sudden change in the policy of Great Britain towards India. The swiftness of the change is marvellous, almost incredible even to us who have striven for it. On August 20th, the first demand of last year's Congress was granted in substance though not in form; we asked for a Royal Proclamation, because that was the most gracious and impressive form and would have made our Emperor yet more popular; we have been given an announcement by the Cabinet of Great Britain, representing the Royal Will.

The Right Hon. the Secretary of State is now among us with other well-known public men from the United

Kingdom. At this stage, nought can be said of the outcome of the visit. But I may rightly place on record the fact that free and full speech has been granted to India's representatives, with friendly and patient hearing from H. E. the Viceroy and from Mr. Montagu.

There has been no shutting out of opinions hostile to the present bureaucratic system of Government, for Lokamanya Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi, and I myself were severally granted full hearing; similar liberty was given to prominent members of the Congress and Muslim League. The Home Rule Leagues were treated equally well.

The outcome is on the lap of the Gods. We know the strength of the vested interests opposed to us, but we have faith in the justice of God, and in the friendliness of all Britons who are true to the traditions of their country. The wish of organised labour in Great Britain to exchange fraternal delegates with the Congress and Home Rule Leagues is a sign of the new Brotherhood between the British and Indian Democracies. The Home Rule Leagues have appointed Mr. Baptista as their fraternal delegate to the Annual Labour Conference next month, and Major Graham Pole comes to us from them. I trust that the Congress will also nominate its fraternal delegates to the Labour Conference, and welcome its messenger to us, and that a link will thus be formed which will draw closer together the United Kingdom and India. For this, as well as for the coming of the Secretary of the State to India, will 1917 be marked as a red-letter year.

OUR INTERNED BROTHERS

It is with deep sorrow that we record the non-release of the Muslim leaders, Muhammad Ali and Shaukat Ali. For three and a quarter long years they have been withdrawn from public life, and condemned to the living death of internment. To high spirited and devoted patriots, no punishment could be more galling and more exasperating. Even had they sinned deeply, the penalty has been paid, and we, who believe in their innocence and honour them

for their fidelity to their religion, can only lay at their feet the expression of our affectionate admiration, and our assurance that their long-drawn-out suffering will be transmuted into power, when the doors are thrown open to them, and they receive the homage of the Nation.

OUR DIVISIONS

Many observers of Indian public life have noted the fissiparous tendency in our political associations, and reactionaries make this a reason for denying to us constitutional liberty. Rightly considered it is a reason for granting it, though to some this statement may seem parodoxical. But what is the position?

We have a Nation, composed of many communities and opinions, trying to obtain liberty. We have above it, a Government, holding all power and all patronage, and able to crush by Executive Orders those whom it considers to be advocates of excessive changes. It tends to ally itself with any party or community which will help it to stave off legislation that diminishes its power. Its natural tendency is to watch for any sign of fission, and to ally itself with the weaker party to crush the stronger, as did the East India Company in its so called "conquest of India". If there be no sign of fission, it may be possible to initiate one, on the lines of the despatch to Lord Lytton when Viceroy of India with regard to a desired war: "If there be no pretext, you must invent one." A similar policy was followed when Dadabhai Naoroji was sent to the British Parliament; Mr. Bhownaggri was set up against him, and succeeded in ousting a strong reformer and replacing him by a reactionary. No political situation could be more unhealthy.

First, take the two great communities of Hindus and Mussalmans. They form two natural parties in the Nation, with the Christian Government above them as the third party for whose favour they compete. Hence Hindu-Mussalman divisions, riots and the rest—which do not exist in Indian States, wherein the Ruler belongs to one of the two Great Religions, and has to rule men of

both—and the constant efforts to dissolve the *entente cordiale* arrived at after long discussions at Calcutta and at Lucknow last year.

There will always be a number in each community who do not feel themselves bound by any agreement come to by the organised political bodies, containing the more reasonable and far-seeing of each community; and these, again, motived by bribe or threat, unofficial but made by officials, an unorganised and irresponsible crowd, will always lend recruits to support the Government, in the hope of obtaining special concessions for their sectional interests.

Hence, also, the anti-Brahmana movement, in the Madras Presidency, with its Association of a few hundred members and its three organs in the Press. It is now happily obscured by a real non-Brahmana Association, the Madras Presidency Association, led by the veteran leader, Dewan Bahadur P. Kesava Pillai, and already many thousands strong. The anti-Brahmana movement aims chiefly at places in the administration, and hopes to gain them more easily by praising the Government and opposing Home Rulers.

Hence, also, various similar movements in other Provinces, any stick being good enough for beating the Home Rule dog.

There is no need for anxiety about these divisions, which must always present kaleidoscopic changes, so long as India is under the rule of an irresponsible Government.

When the third, non-National party, no longer governs, the National parties will become grouped into healthy constituents of the body politic, distinguished by differences of principle. The use of power will create a sense of responsibility, and responsibility will bring about reasonable discipline.

We make too much of these transitory difficulties and quarrels, and give them an importance far beyond their real mischief-making power. They will assume their proper proportions when we have won Home Rule.

ISOLATED REFORMS

I do not propose to dwell on the isolated Reforms for which the Congress has asked during the whole period of its existence. The majority of Congressmen are tired of asking for the same thing over and over again, and feel that it is better to concentrate on Home Rule, since, once the people have power, they can get rid of bad laws and make good ones for themselves.

Indian Legislatures will take up the Congress Resolutions, and carry into law all that are applicable to the changed conditions. Free India will separate Executive from Judicial functions, and also separate Revenue Officers, Judiciary and Police, place the lower Judiciary under the High Court instead of the Executive, pass Education Acts, make trial by Jury general, protect her Emigrants and Indians settled abroad, deal with Land Settlement equitably, organise and develop Indian Industries, examine for her Services within her own borders, re-organise her administration so as to abolish racial inequalities, and establish Military Colleges to fit her youth for the King's Commissions.

The whole of the special legislation against constitutional agitation—as understood in Great Britain—penalising writing and speech which do not incite to crime nor transgress the law of libel, will be swept away, as unworthy of a civilised country. The Executive will be deprived of the power to punish without trial, to imprison, incarcerate, impoverish, deport, intern and extern, on secret police accusations and suspicions, and confidential reports of magistrates. No man shall thus suffer without knowing his offence, nor be deprived of liberty without open trial and full opportunity of defence. Peaceful political propaganda, processions, flags and meetings will not be interfered with by Magistrates and Police Officers. In fact, India will once more enjoy the ordinary elementry human rights secured by Magna Charta and the Bill of Rights.

Think of the joy of being a free man in a free country, the equal of other civilised men; of breathing in an India at last purged of the poisonous atmosphere of coercion; of knowing that liberty of person and safety of property cannot be touched save by open trial; that one cannot become a criminal unconsciously, and at the whim of an Executive, shrouded in darkness; that one enjoys the ordinary liberty of a civilised human being in a country ruled by law alone, uninterfered with by arbitrary Executive Orders. That security can only come to us with Home Rule.

CONCLUSION

Fellow-Delegates,—Pardon me that I have kept you so long. Only once in my life can I take this Congress Chair, and speak my heart out to you on this country that we love so well. Who can tell, in the present keen strife, if I shall be left free to speak to you again, to work with you as your leader, during this coming year of office. If I am allowed to carry on my work, then I crave your help during the coming year. You have trusted me enough to elect me as your President; trust me enough to work with me as your President, until I prove false to your trust. You cannot always agree with me, and I do not shrink from your criticism. I only ask you not to take for granted the truth of everything said against me by my enemies, for I cannot spare time to answer them. I cannot promise to please you always, but I can promise to strive my best to serve the Nation, as I judge of service. I cannot promise to agree with and to follow you always; the duty of a leader is to lead. While he should always consult his colleagues and listen to their advice, the final responsibility before the public must be his, and his, therefore, the final decision. A general should see further than his officers and his army, and cannot explain, while battles are going on, every move in a campaign; he is to be justified or condemned by his results. Up till now, knowing myself to be of this Nation only by love and service, not by birth, I have claimed no authority of leadership, but have only fought in the front of the battle and served as best I might.

Now, by your election, I take the place which you have given, and will strive to fill it worthily.

Enough of myself. Let us think of the Mother.

To see India free, to see her hold up her head among the Nations, to see her sons and daughters respected everywhere, to see her worthy of her mighty Past, engaged in building a yet mightier Future—is not this worth working for, worth suffering for, worth living and worth dying for? Is there any other land which evokes such love for her spirituality, such admiration for her literature, such homage for her valour, as this glorious Mother of Nations, from whose womb went forth the races that now, in Europe and America, are leading the world? And has any land suffered as our India has suffered, since her sword was broken on Kurukshetra, and the peoples of Europe and of Asia swept across her borders, laid waste her cities, and discrowned her Kings. They came to conquer, but they remained to be absorbed. At last, out of those mingled peoples, the Divine Artificer has welded a Nation, compact not only of her own virtues, but also of those her foes had brought to her, and gradually eliminating the vices which they had also brought.

After a history of millennia, stretching far back out of the ken of mortal eyes; having lived with, but not died with, the mighty civilisations of the Past; having seen them rise and flourish and decay, until only their sepulchres remained, deep buried in earth's crust; having wrought, and triumphed, and suffered, and having survived all changes unbroken; India, who has been verily the Crucified among the Nations, now stands on this her Resurrection morning, the Immortal, the Glorious, the Ever-Young; and India shall soon be seen, proud and self-reliant, strong and free, the radiant Splendour of Asia, as the Light and the Benediction of the World.

Thirty-third Congress—Delhi—1918.

PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

MR. CHAIRMAN, Brother-Deligates, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I thank you all from the bottom of my heart for the honour you have done me in inviting me to preside over this great assembly. As has often been said the Presidentship of the Congress is the highest honour which the people of this country can bestow upon any one. It is doubly so when it is conferred a second time. This honour is enhanced in the present instance by the fact that you have been pleased to call upon me to guide the deliberations of our great national assembly at a time when momentous events which affect India as well as the rest of the civilized world are taking place, and when questions of the most far-reaching importance, which have a direct and immediate bearing on our future, are to be considered by the Congress. I am most deeply grateful to you for this signal mark of your confidence in me. I am also grateful to my esteemed friend Mr. Vijiaraghava Achariar, whom I so much miss in the Imperial Legislative Council where his unyielding independence and incisive logic made him a source of great strength to the people's cause, for having retired in my favour because his selfless anxiety for the country's cause, and his partiality for an old friend, led him to think that my election would serve that cause better at this particular juncture. I sincerely wish I could feel that I deserved all this honour and confidence. I pray to God that with your generous help I may prove not unworthy of it, and that our deliberations may be such as will redound to our credit and the honour and advancement of our country.

The importance of this session of the Congress does not need to be emphasized. We meet to-day in this ancient capital of the Indian Empire, hoary with all its historic traditions and associations. It irresistibly brings to our minds a crowd of thoughts, happy and the reverse, of the glories and the vicissitudes which our ancient land has undergone. The impulse to dwell upon them is strong, but I will not do so at this place. I will dwell here rather upon the living present. We are meeting at a time when the civilized world is celebrating the happy end of the greatest and bloodiest war known to history. That the end was announced in a memorable utterance by the distinguished Premier of of England when, addressing the people of Britain, he said :

> You are entitled to rejoice, people of Britain, that the Allies, the Dominions and India have won a glorious victory. It is the most wonderful victory for liberty in the history of the world.

You, too, my countrymen, are entitled to rejoice as you have actually been rejoicing, that this great victory has been won. You are also entitled to feel justly proud that our country has played a noble part in this great war, and made a magnificent contribution to its glorious end. As His Excellency the Viceroy very well said the other day :

> She was early in the field helping to stem the rush of Teutonic hordes and she has been in at the end, and her troops largely contributed to the staggering blow in Palestine which first caused our foe to totter to his fall.

India had many grievances against England when the war broke out. But she had not lost faith in the Briton's love of justice and liberty. And the moment the message of His Majesty the King of England and Emperor of India was received, announcing that he had been compelled to draw the sword in defence of liberty and of treaty rights and obligations, India loyally put aside her grievances, buried her differences, and her princes and people readily identified themselves with the cause which England had taken because it was the cause of righteousness and liberty. Both our national traditions and our national aspirations predisposed us to that attitude. In days long past, the

memory of which is still cherished, our ancestors had waged the greatest war recorded in our history—the Mahabharata—and sacrificed the entire manhood of the nation to establish "the triumph of righteousness." And for thirty years we had been carrying on a constitution *ala gitat* to obtain some measure of power to administer our own affairs. Consequently all classes and communities of our people enthusiastically united in giving an assurance of unswerving loyalty and unflinching support to His Majesty the King-Emperor in the prosecution of the war to a successful end. The ruling princes and the people of India made what His Majesty was pleased lovingly to describe in his gracious message of September 14, 1914, as 'prodigal offers of their lives and treasure in the cause of the realm.' Let us thank God that our deeds have been as good as our word. We have helped to the full extent of the demand made upon us, and more, in men, money and material. Both our honoured ruling princes and our peasants have contributed their quota of service to the war, and both have made money contributions in numerous instances beyond their means. From the day His Majesty's message was received, India urged with one voice that her valiant soldiers should be sent to France to be in the forefront of the conflict. Our late Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, who trusted the Indians and who was trusted of them, appreciated our proposal and with the foresight and courage that distinguished him, he despatched Indian troops to France. Both India and the Allies owe him gratitude for this act of statesmanship. Our troops saved the situation in France in 1914 and covered themselves with glory.

The full value of the contributions of the princes and people of India in money and resources remains to be calculated. But we know that it amounts to over two hundred millions, or three hundred crores. As regards our contributions in men, the Secretary of State for India stated the other day in Parliament that 1,161,789 Indians had been recruited since the War began and 1,215,338 men had been sent overseas from India, and that

of those 101,439 had become casualties. These are contributions of which we have every reason to be proud. More proud are we of the fact that throughout all these four years of trial and tribulation, in the face of the extreme suffering which the war inflicted upon our people, and even when the sky seemed to be much overcast, India remained unshaken equally in her loyalty to the King-Emperor and in her resolve to do her utmost to help the Empire till the end. This is particularly noteworthy in the case of our Mussulman brethren. Every one knows how deep are their religious sentiments towards Turkey, and how profound their concern in everything that affects her. When, therefore, unfortunately, Turkey was persuaded by the Central Powers to join them against our King-Emperor and his Allies, the feelings of our Mahomedan brethren were put to the sorest test. No thoughtful Mahomedan could be indifferent to the fate which might overtake Turkey. But it must to-day be a source of the sincerest satisfaction to every Indian Mahomedan who loves his country and community, that the community did not at any time allow its religious sentiments to overpower its sense of duty to the King and to the motherland, and that it remained firm in its support of the cause of the Empire. This is a fact of great moment in the history of our country. It is a matter for sincere thankfulness and congratulations to all our fellow-subjects and ourselves.

Before we proceed further, let me ask you, men and women of all faiths, whom it is my privilege at this moment to address, and to worship our one common God under different names and in diverse ways, to join in offering Him our humble and profound thanks that the war has come to a happy end, and in praying that it may prove to be the precursor of a lasting, just and universal peace. Let me next, on your behalf and on mine, offer our loyal greetings and dutiful congratulations to His Majesty the King-Emperor on the happy termination of the war. It gives us Indians particular satisfaction to think that while the despotic monarchs of other lands have dis-

appeared, our noble King-Emperor, exercising his beneficent power in consonance with the constitution of the country and the will of his people, sits even more firm in the affections of the people than before. We also offer our cordial congratulations to our fellow subjects of the United Kingdom, and their sturdy children in the Dominions overseas, on the glorious result of their great efforts and sacrifices in the cause of liberty and right. If England had not joined the war and thrown her whole strength and resources into the fight, like Belgium, France would long ago have been compelled to give up the fight, and Germany's ambitions would have been realized. Great have been the sacrifices England has made. But greater therefore is the glory she has won. I am sure you also wish to offer your cordial congratulations to the noble people of France, who have won imperishable glory by sustaining the most splendid fight against tremendous odds in defence of their great land of liberty, equality and fraternity. We watched their struggle with the deepest sympathy and with the sincerest admiration; and it is a matter of particular pride and gratification to us to think that our Indian Expeditionary Force was able to reach France in the nick of time to be of help to them and to save the cause both of the Allies and of civilization in the fearful struggle of 1914-15. Lastly, we must offer our thanks and congratulations to the great people of America whose unselfish entry into the war, involving all the tremendous sacrifice of men and money it did, was the finest tribute to the righteous character of the war which the Allies had been waging, as well as the greatest contribution to the cause of liberty and justice. Humanity owes a deep debt of gratitude to America for the decisive part which she has played under the wise and firm guidance of its noble President in the overthrow of German militarism. Adopting the words of the President: "We must all thank God with the deepest gratitude that the Americans came into the lines of battle just at the critical moment when the whole fate of the world seemed to hang in the balance, and threw their fresh strength into the ranks of freedom in time to turn the whole tide and sweep off the fateful struggle." It

is our privilege and our pride to send our congratulations to the people of those great nations because our soldiers fought on the same side with them on the battlefields of France and Flanders, and thereby established between them and us a comradeship in a righteous cause which we fervently hope will be the basis of lasting friendship between us.

THE HAND OF PROVIDENCE IN THE WAR

Ladies and Gentlemen, to my mind the hand of Providence is clearly discernible both in the development of this war and its termination. The world, and particularly the European world, needed a correction and a change. It had been too much given up to materialism and had been too much estranged from spiritual considerations. It had flouted the principle that righteousness exalteth a nation. In spite of the vaunted civilization of Europe, some of its nations have been living in a state of international anarchy and their relations to one another and to the outer world turned upon force. They have been dominated by an overpowering passion for wealth and power, and in their mad pursuit of it have trampled upon the rights and liberties of weaker states and peoples. Spain, Austria, and France each sought the mastery of Europe in the past. Germany attempted it this time. England has not, since the fifteenth century, attacked the independence of any European State, but has befriended them when they have been threatened by their more powerful neighbours. But she too has followed a different policy in Asia and Africa. During the last half century only, she has waged wars to annex Egypt, the Soudan, the South African Republics, and Burma, besides several other minor wars. There have been great quarrels among the nations of Europe about markets and colonial possessions. There have been contentions between France and Germany for the control of Morocco, between Russia and Austria for the control of the Balkans, between Germany and the other powers for the control of Turkey. These great rivalries among them have led them to live in constant fear of war, and ever to keep themselves prepared for it. The earth has

been groaning under the burden of big battalions and armaments. There have been treaties and alliances, but they were entered into to keep up the balance of power among them. The determining factor in international relations has been force. Any nation which wished to attack another could do so with impunity if it made itself superior to that other in brute force. England had, by a long course of events, gained the highest position and power among the nations of Europe. She naturally wanted to maintain it at all costs. Her younger sister Germany became jealous of her and was fired with the ambition to outshine her. For decades past she pursued a systematic policy of national development—military, naval, industrial, economic—with the object of striking a blow for world-power. She converted a whole nation into a wonderfully well-organized disciplined, and equipped army. It is difficult to imagine how any nation can prepare itself better to carry everything before it by force than did Germany. She wantonly broke the peace of the world when she thought it was most advantageous for her to do so. Her force was strengthened by the forces of her stubborn allies. On the other side were arrayed the forces of the Allies—English, French, Russian, Italian, the people of the Dominions and of India. It is difficult to imagine a stronger array of forces on either side than there actually was in this war. If diplomacy had not led Russia to fail the Allies, they might probably have succeeded earlier. But the purpose of the war would not have been served in that way. The war therefore went on in its grim horror. A few months before the termination of hostilities it seemed as if the Germans were going to succeed. The hearts of France and England and the rest of the allied world trembled with fear that in spite of all the combined efforts of the Allies and all the sacrifices which they had undergone for four years, the Germans were going to succeed in their wicked ambition. But they were not to succeed because they were in the wrong. Providence had decreed that the Allies should succeed because they were in the right. But Providence did not yet bless their efforts, for they had still to learn that the laws of Karma are inexorable, that

Our acts our angels are, or good or ill,
Our fatal shadows that walk by us still.

Many of the Allies also had too often in the past acted on the evil principle that might is right, and not all of them perhaps were yet prepared to act in their dealings, with all nations and peoples on the principle that right is might.

At the special Service of penitence and humble prayer held on the third anniversary of the War, the high-souled Lord Bishop of Calcutta dwelt upon the fact that time and again the Allies had been held back from victory by circumstances which were not or could not be expected. And His Lordship said :

What was God saying all this while to our nation and Empire? 'You must change, you must change, before I can give you victory.' 'You must change' is addressed to the nation as a whole and to all the individuals of it. The United States of America joined with us, and their adhesion makes the continuation of the war certain. Thus our nation is granted another chance to change itself. The same divine demand is reiterated : 'You must change before I can give you victory.'

It was the evident purpose of Providence that the powerful nations of the world should undergo a moral rebirth and not only that this war should re-establish the principle that right is might, but that international anarchy should be ended and the warring nations of the world should agree to establish a moral order and a permanent arrangement among them to ensure just and fair dealings with one another and the rest of the human family in the future. For the accomplishment of this purpose it was necessary that the war should not end until America joined it and until the nations agreed to the peace proposals which were to be the basis of this order. It was therefore only when they had so agreed that Providence enabled America to come in at the critical moment to help the Allies and to turn the scale against Germany.

This is not a matter of mere inference and argument. President Wilson has distinctly said that America did not come into the war merely to win it. As he put it, she came in to be

instrumental in establishing peace secure against the violence of irresponsible monarchs and the ambitions of military coteries and make ready for a new order, for new foundations of justice and fair dealing.

"We are about to give order and organization," said the great American who has evidently been appointed by God to be the master mason in building the new temple of international justice:

> We are about to give order and organization to the peace not only for ourselves but for other people of the world as well, as far as they will suffer us to serve them. It is international justice we seek, not domestic safety.

He had outlined the basis of peace. The allied Government had accepted his proposals at once; the Central Powers when they could not help doing it. And he is now at the Conference at Paris to help in the settlement of peace. As he recently said:

> Peace settlements which are now to be agreed upon are of transcendant importance to us and to the rest of the world. The gallant men of our forces on land and sea have consciously fought for the ideals of their country. I have sought to express these ideals and they have been accepted by statesmen as substance of their own thought and purpose. As the Associated Governments have accepted them, I owe it to them to see to it so far as in me lies that no false or mistaken interpretation is put upon them, and no possible effort omitted to realize them. It is now my duty to play my full part in making good what they offered their lives and blood to obtain.

THE IDEALS OF AMERICA

Now what are the ideals that America has fought for? President Wilson stated them in the clearest terms in his memorable address to Congress on the 9th of January last. It is necessary to recall them to mind. He said:

> The way of conquest and aggrandisement and secret understanding is past. We entered the war in consequence of the violations of right which touched us to the quick and made our life impossible unless they were corrected and we would be secure against their recurrence. We therefore demand that the world should be made safe and fit to live in. *All peoples of the world are in effect partners in this interest.* Therefore the *programme of the world's peace* is our programme.

He then enumerated his now famous fourteen points. Briefly these were :

(1) Open covenants of peace openly arrived at without any secret diplomacy ; (2) the freedom of the seas subject to certain international conditions ; (3) removal of all economic barriers and equality of trade conditions among all people consenting to the peace and associating for its maintenance ; (4) national armaments to be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety ; (5) free, open-minded and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims based on the strict observance of the principle that in determining such questions the sovereignty and interest of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the Government whose title is to be determined ; (6) the evacuation of all Russian territory and the securing to her of unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for independent determination of her own political development and national policy ; (7) the evacuation of Belgium and the complete restoration of her sovereignty ; (8) the evacuation of all occupied French territories and the restoration of Alsace-Lorraine ; (9) the readjustment of the frontiers of Italy along clearly recognizable lines of nationality ; (10) securing to Austria-Hungary opportunities for autonomous development ; (11) the settlement of the disputes of the Balkan States by mutual agreement and international guarantees of their political and economic independence and territorial integrity ; (12) securing sovereignty to Turkey over the Turkish portions of the present Ottoman Empire, but assuring security of life and autonomous development to other nationalities now under Turkish rule ; (13) the creation of an independent Polish State with international guarantees of political and economic independence and territorial integrity and (14) the formation of a general association of nations under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity *for great and small states alike.*

President Wilson concluded his message to Congress with the following summary of the ideals of America :

An evident principle runs through the whole programme I have outlined. *It is the principle of justice to all peoples and nationalities and their right to live on equal terms of liberty and safety with one another.* Unless this principle be made its foundation, no part of the structure of international justice can stand. The people of the United States could act upon no other principle ; and in vindication of this principle they are ready to devote their lives and honour and everything they possess. The moral climax of this culminating war for human liberty has come, and they are ready to put their own strength, their own highest purpose, their own integrity and devotion to the test.

These noble sentiments are worthy of the great people of America and, I am sure, they have filled all lovers of right and liberty with gratitude and the hope of a better world. There have been attempts made before this to have international disputes settled by arbitration. There have been organisations made for preventing wars and preserving peace among nations. But never before in the history of the world has there been such a great attempt at establishing new foundations of justice and fair dealings among the nations of the earth and at forming a world-wide organization to carry out the scheme. The great war was needed to bring this about. The fact that three such liberty loving nations as Great Britain, France and America are united in purpose to give effect to these proposals, and that Germany, Russia and all the other nations concerned have accepted them, is a matter for most sincere thanksgiving and congratulation. If the proposals are carried out, as we must all hope and pray they will be, they will go far to establish a reign of righteousness among nations and usher a new era of peace on earth and good will among men. If this comes about, the enormous sacrifices of life and treasure which the war has entailed will have been made to good purpose. I am sure, my countrymen, that you who are the inheritors of great spiritual civilizations, most heartily and reverently welcome these proposals and that you will be willing to undergo any sacrifices to give them your cordial support. I would suggest that as representatives of one-fifth of the human race and of this great and ancient land, we should

send to the gentlemen who are engaged in this holy task at Paris, our respectful good wishes and our fervent prayers for the success of their noble undertaking, (*Hear, hear.*) I venture to suggest that we may also convey to them an humble expression of our willingness to contribute whatever lies in our power to the success of the scheme. We may assure them that thousands of our young men will gladly and gratefully enrol as Soldiers of God in any international organization that may be formed to support the proposed League of Nations. (*Hear, hear.*)

INDIA AND THE PEACE CONFERENCE

You will remember, Ladies and Gentlemen, that when speaking of our contributions to the war, Mr. Lloyd George had promised that India's necessities would not be forgotten when the Peace Conference would be reached. We are thankful to him and to the British Cabinet generally for having recognised the justice of India's claim to be represented at the Conference. We are also thankful that the Government have appointed an Indian—our distinguished countryman Sir S. P. Sinha—to represent her at the Conference. But he has been appointed by the Government of India without any reference to the public. As he has been so appointed, presumably he will represent at the Conference views which are in consonance with the views of that Government. It may be that those views will be in agreement with the views of the Indian public, or it may not be so. We do not know what are the conditions under which Sir S. P. Sinha has been appointed, or what instructions the Government of India have given him. Unfortunately, the Government of India are not yet responsible to the Indian public; and, as matters stand, there often is a great divergence of views between them and the public of India. This being so, one may be allowed to say, without any reflection against my esteemed friend Sir S. P. Sinha and without forgetting how much he has by his character and talents contributed to the cause of Indian progress, that it would have been more in consonance with the spirit and aim of the Conference, and also in keeping with the proposals of constitutional reform

which contemplate the appointment of ministers from among the elected members of the Councils, if the Government had seen their way to ask the Congress and the Muslim League which they knew were going to meet here this week, or the elected members of the Imperial and Provincial Legisiative Councils, to recommend an Indian or Indians for appointment by the Government as India's representatives at the Conference. In view of the fact that Canada is going to have as many as six representatives, it need not have been apprehended that a request that India should be allowed to have more than one representative would be regarded as unreasonable. There is a widespread opinion in the country that something like this should have been done. This view is not urged because of any delusion that the proposals for constitutional reform relating to India will be discussed at the Peace Conference. I suppose every one understands that they will be discussed in the British Parliament. But it is urged because of the belief that the principles, and even some of the concrete proposals which will be discussed and settled at the Peace Conference, will have a great, direct and indirect, bearing on the interests of our country. This cannot be disputed. If it were not so, there would have been little meaning in appointing an Indian to represent "India's necessities" at the Peace Conference. I am glad that His Highness the Maharajah Sahib of Bikaner will be there to represent the views of the Indian States and Ruling Princes, whose steadfast loyalty to and support of the King-Emperor during this war has been often times greater value than their liberal contributions in men and money alone. But it will remain a matter for regret that British India will not be represented at this great Conference by a person appointed by the Government on the recommendation of the elected representatives of the people.

INDIA'S POSITION

India, ladies and gentlemen, occupies at present an anomalous and unhappy position. The people of India—Hindus, Mussulmans, Parsis and Christians—are the in-

heritors of great and ancient civilizations. About a hundred and fifty years ago, the whole of India was under the rule of Indians. At that time she was passing through one of those periods of decay and internal disorder which are not unknown in the history of other nations. By an extraordinary combination of circumstances, which had their origin in the conditions then prevailing, India came to be placed under the rule of a people living six thousand miles beyond the seas and strangers to Indians in race, religion and civilisation. As has often been said, India was never conquered by the English in the literal sense of the term. The English became the paramount power in India by a series of events carried on by the help of Indian soldiers and Indian allies. The people supported them and welcomed them because they promoted order and peace and introduced justice and good administration. In the early days of British rule in India, English statesmen regarded it as of a temporary character. They clearly said that it was their duty to so administer India as to help her to take up her own government and to administer it in her own fashion. But as time rolled on, and vested interests grew up and became strong, a contrary spirit came to dominate British policy in India. The administration came to be conducted less and less in a manner conducive to the development of the people as a nation and more and more so as to perpetuate their subjection. Indians noted it and protested against it. Many large-hearted Englishmen deplored it. Foreign critics also noted the fact. An eminent Frenchman, M. Challey, wrote in his book published a few years ago:

> Had England taken as a motto 'India for the Indians,' had she continued following the idea of Elphinstone and Malcolm to consider her rule as temporary, she might, without inconsistency, grant to the national party gradual and increasing concessions which in time would give entire autonomy to the Indians, but that is not now her aim.

For half a century and more, Indians and liberal-minded Englishmen had been urging England to adopt the policy of India for the Indians, to Indianise the administration and to give power and

opportunity to Indians to administer their own affairs. Thirty years before the war, the Indian National Congress came into existence and it had ever since its birth urged that a fair measure of self-government should be given to the people. The scheme of reform which the Congress put forward in 1886, was calculated to secure them such power, but they have not got it till now. Since 1908 we had specially stated that self-government on colonial lines was our goal.

I draw attention to these facts so that it may be remembered that we had been pressing for a recognition of our right to self-government long before the war. It is not the war, its events, and its results that have led us to ask for self-government for the first time. Even if the war did not come, our claim to it should have been granted long ago as a mere matter of right and simple justice. The war no doubt came to help us. The contributions which we were able to make brought about a happy change in the angle of vision of English statesmen. In December 1916, our two great national institutions, the Congress and the Muslim League, that is to say, the representatives of thinking India, jointly put forward a well-considered moderate scheme of reform which would have given to the people a substantial measure of self-government. It is an open secret now that the response which the Government of India suggested to this demand was so poor and inadequate that Mr. Austen Chamberlain returned the proposals and suggested the preparation of a more liberal measure which would give some responsibility to the people. In the meantime, agitation in support of the Congress-League scheme was growing. The Executive Governments in India, Imperial and Provincial, were generally strongly opposed to the proposals, many of them showed this opposition by trying to suppress the agitation by orders of internment under the Defence of India Act and in other ways, and created much unnecessary tension in public feeling. On the other hand, besides the Indians there were Englishmen and Englishwomen who urged that the promise of self-government should not be delayed.

That high-souled Englishman, the Lord Bishop of Calcutta, said in the course of the Service to which reference has been made before :

> We must now look at our paramount position in the light of our new war ideals. The British rule in India must aim at giving India opportunities of self-development according to the natural bent of its peoples. With this in view the first object of its rulers must be to train Indians in self-government. If we turn away from any such application of our principles to this country, it is but hypocrisy to come before God with the plea that our cause is the cause of liberty.

The situation rendered an early announcement of the intentions of Government necessary. It was in this state of affairs that the Secretary of State for India made the now famous declaration of the 20th August 1917, in which he definitely stated that the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire was the policy of His Majesty's Government and that they had decided that substantial steps in this direction should be taken as soon as possible.

It was a momentous utterance. But it was unnecessarily cautious and cold. We did not like all the qualifying conditions with which it was weighted. But we looked at it as a whole. It promised that substantial steps in the direction of the goal of responsible government in India would be taken as soon as possible, and that His Majesty's Government had decided that, accepting the Viceroy's invitation, the Secretary of State should shortly visit India to consider what those steps should be and to receive suggestions of representative bodies and others regarding them. It also promised that ample opportunity would be afforded for public discussion of the proposals which would be submitted in due course to Parliament. We therefore welcomed the announcement and were grateful for it. Though dissatisfied with its many qualifying conditions, in the circumstances then existing, we accepted it with hope and gratitude. Mr. Montagu came to India with a deputation of distinguished men. Taking the announcement of the 20th August as

laying down the terms of their reference, he and Lord Chelmsford elaborated proposals as to the first substantial steps which should be taken to give effect to the policy enunciated in it. The limitations of the announcement naturally had their effect in determining the nature and extent of their proposals. These proposals have now been before the public for several months. They have been variously criticised by various bodies. On the first publication of the proposals, while some of our prominent public men gave them a cordial welcome, others condemned them as unsatisfactory and disappointing. Some urged their total rejection. The Congress-League scheme which had been put forward with the unanimous support of the public men of the country was calculated to transfer control to the representatives of the people, both in the Provincial Governments and, subject to certain reservations, in the Government of India. The official Scheme proposed a limited measure of control in the Provincial Governments and absolutely none over the Imperial Government. The official proposals thus fell very short of the Congress-League scheme. They were, therefore, generally regarded as inadequate. It was clear that while acknowledging that the proposals constituted an advance on existing conditions in certain directions, the bulk of public opinion in India was not satisfied with the Scheme as it stood. Almost everybody who was anybody wanted more or less important modifications and improvements in the Scheme. But the Scheme proposed the introduction of a certain measure of responsible government in the Provincial Governments, and was in this respect more in conformity with the announcement of the 20th August than the Congress-League scheme, and many of us urged that the official proposals should be accepted subject to the necessary modifications and improvements. This view found general acceptance in the country.

When the Special Congress met at Bombay, it was apprehended in some quarters that the opinions of those who were in favour of insisting upon the acceptance of the

Congress-League scheme and the rejection of the official proposals, might prevail at the Congress. But the proceedings of the Congress lent no support to these apprehensions. While the Congress made its acknowledgments to Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford for the earnest attempt to inaugurate a system of responsible government in India, it made it clear that it regarded the proposals as they stood as unsatisfactory and disappointing. At the same time it recognized that the official scheme was more in consonance with the announcement of August 20th, and it therefore decided to accept that scheme in its outline and to urge modifications and improvements consistent with the outline which, in its opinion, were absolutely necessary to make it a substantial first step towards responsible government in India, that is, both in the Central and Provincial Governments. The All-India Moslem League also adopted the same view. Two months after, a Conference, organized by those of our prominent public men who had more cordially welcomed the proposals of reform than the great bulk of the public, met at Bombay. They too agreed with the Congress and the League in asking for certain essential modifications and improvements in the Scheme. It has thus become as clear as noon-day light that enlightened Indian public opinion is unanimous in urging that the principle of responsible government should be introduced in the Government of India simultaneously with a similar reform in the Provinces, and that there should be a division of functions in the Central Government into reserved and transferred as a part of the first instalment of reforms. It is unanimous in urging fiscal freedom for India. It is unanimous in urging that half the number of the members of the Council of State should be elected. It is unanimous in urging that Indians should constitute one-half of the Executive Government of India. It is unanimous in asking that the popular houses should elect their presidents and vice-presidents. It is unanimous in requiring that the elective majority should be four-fifths; and that the reserved list should be as small and the transferred list as large as possible. It is unanimous in asking that Ministers should

be placed on a footing of perfect equality with the members of the Executive Council. It is unanimous in asking for a complete separation of judicial from executive functions. It is unanimous in urging that 50 per cent. of the posts in the Indian Civil Service, and, to start with, 25 per cent. of the King's Commissions in the army should be secured to Indians, and that adequate provision for training them should be made in the country itself. It is unanimous in urging that the ordinary constitutional rights, such as freedom of the press and public meeting and open judicial trials should be safeguarded, though there is a difference of opinion about the methods suggested to secure the end. I have not attempted an exhaustive enumeration. My object here is to show that there is notwithstanding differences over unimportant matters and notwithstanding all that we hear of divisions and parties, practical unanimity in the country about the most essential changes and improvements which are needed in the proposals of reform. I will not anticipate your decisions. It is for you to decide whether in view of the events which have taken place since the Congress met, you will reconsider any or all of the matters which were considered by the Special Congress, or whether you will let its decisions stand as they are. Considering how grave and momentous are the issues involved, I would reconsider them and welcome any suggestions which would improve them. Since the Congress met, events have taken place which would obviously justify such a course. As a mere illustration, I draw attention to one. In the resolution relating to the Provincial Government, while holding that the people are ripe for the introduction of full provincial autonomy, the Congress said it was yet prepared, with a view of facilitating the passage of the Reforms, to leave the departments of law, police and justice (prisons excepted) in the hands of the Executive Government for a period of six years. Since this resolution was passed, the Functions Committee as well as the Franchise Committee has already visited several Provinces, and in two of the Major Provinces it has been urged that full provincial autonomy should be granted there at once, namely, the United Provinces and Bombay, in the

former by the Provincial Congress Committee, and in the latter by the non-official members of the Bombay Legislative Council, among whom are such esteemed gentlemen of known moderate views as the Hon'ble Mr. Gokuldas Parekh. We may assume that Bengal and Madras also will demand full provincial autonomy. In view of these facts the resolutions of the Congress on the subject may well be reconsidered.

INDIA AND THE RESULTS OF THE WAR

But, Ladies and Gentlemen, by far the most important event which has taken place since the Congress met is the happy termination of the war. In concluding their Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms, Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford said :

> If anything could enhance the sense of responsibility under which our recommendations are made in a matter fraught with consequences so immense, it would be the knowledge that even as we bring our report to an end far greater issues still hang in the balance upon the battlefields of France. It is there and not in Delhi or Whitehall that the ultimate decision of India's future will be taken.

Happily for India and the rest of the civilized world that decision has now been taken. It was announced in the memorable utterance of the Premier referred to before, in which he said : "You are entitled to rejoice, people of Britain, that the Allies, Dominions and India have won a glorious victory. It is the most wonderful victory for liberty in the history of the world." How does this great event affect our position ? How far is India going to share the fruits of the glorious victory to which it has been her privilege to contribute ? It is highly encouraging in this connection to remember how generous has been the appreciation expressed by the distinguished Premier and other statesmen of Great Britain of the services of India to the war. Let me recall a few of their utterances. Speaking in September 1914, Mr. Asquith, the then Prime Minister of England, said :

> We welcome with appreciation and affection India's profferred aid in the Empire which knows no distinction of race or class, where all alike are subjects of the King-Emperor and are joint

and equal custodians of her common interest and fortunes. We hail with profound and heart-felt gratitude their association side by side and shoulder to shoulder with the Home and Dominion troops under a flag which is a symbol to all of the unity that the world in arms cannot dissever or dissolve.

Mr. Bonar Law said :

I do not think we fully realize how much these Indians who have fought and died by the side of our soldiers have helped us through these long months.

Speaking on the 9th of September, Lord Haldane, the then Lord Chancellor of England, said :

Indian soldiers are fighting for the liberty of humanity as much as ourselves. India has freely given her lives and treasure in humanity's great cause ; hence things cannot be left as they are.

Speaking in February 1917, in the House of Commons, Mr. Lloyd George said :

The contribution of the Dominions and of India has been splendid. The assistance they have given us in the most trying hours of this campaign has been incalculable in its value.

In the introduction to Col. Merewether's 'Indian Corps in France ', Lord Curzon said :

The book describes the manner in which the force and the drafts and reinforcements by which it was followed comported themselves in the fearful struggle of 1914-15. That the Indian Expeditionary Force arrived in the nick of time, that it helped to save the cause both of the Allies and of civilization (*hear, hear*) after the sanguinary tumult of the opening weeks of the war, has been openly acknowledged by the highest in the land from the Sovereign downwards. I recall that it was emphatically stated to me by Lord French himself. The nature and value of that service can never be forgotten.

Speaking again in the House of Commons, Mr. Lloyd George said :

And then there is India. How bravely, how loyally, she has supported the British Armies. The memory of the powerful aid which she willingly accorded in the hour of our trouble will not be forgotten after the war is over, and when the affairs of India come up for examination and for action.

Speaking on the 8th of November last, Mr. Lloyd George said :

These young nations (the Dominions) fought bravely and contributed greatly and won their place at the Council Table. What is true of them is equally true of the Great Empire of India, which helped us materially to win these brilliant victories which were the beginning of the disintegration of our foes. India's necessities must not be forgotten when the Peace Conference is reached. We have had four years of great brotherhood. Let it not end there.

I am sure, Ladies and Gentlemen, we all feel most deeply grateful to these our English fellow-subjects for their generous appreciation of our contributions to the war. The question now is to what extent is India going to benefit by the principles for which she gave her lives and treasure, namely, the principles of justice and liberty, of the right of every nation to live an unmolested life of freedom and to grow according to its own God-given nature, to manage its own affairs, and to mould its own destiny. The principles for which Great Britain and the Allies fought have now been embodied in the Peace Proposals of President Wilson to which I have referred before. These principles have been adopted with the hearty concurrence and support of Great Britain. Indeed, the credit for adopting them is in one sense greater in the case of Britain and France than in the case of America. For, Britain and France had borne the brunt of the war for four years and by their unconquerable courage and heroic sacrifices made it possible for themselves and the Allies to achieve the final victory. Besides their sufferings and sacrifices had also been incomparably greater than those of America and their feelings far more deeply injured. It was the more praiseworthy of them, therefore, that they readily agreed to the Peace Proposals, which ran counter in some instances to the decisions which they had themselves previously arrived at.

Now the principle that runs through the Peace Proposals is the principle of justice to all peoples and nationalities and their right to live on equal terms of liberty and safety with one another. Each nation is to be given freedom to determine its own affairs and to mould its own destinies. Russia is to have an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for independent determination

of her own political development and national policy. Austria-Hungary is to be accorded the opportunity of autonomous development. International guarantees of political and economic independence and territorial integrity are to be secured to the Balkan States, and to the independent Polish States which are to be created. Nationalities other than Turkish now under Turkish rule are to be assured security of life and autonomous development. In the adjustment of colonial claims the principle to be followed is that in determining such questions the sovereignty and interests of the population concerned are to have equal weight with the equitable claims of the Government whose title is to be determined. How far are these principles of autonomy and self-determination to be applied to India? That is the question for consideration. We are happy to find that the Governments of Britain and France have already decided to give effect to these principles in the case of Syria and Mesopotamia. This has strengthened our hope that they will be extended to India also. Standing in this ancient capital of India, both of the Hindu and Mahomedan periods, it fills me, my countrymen and countrywomen, with inexpressible sorrow and shame to think that we, the descendants of Hindus who ruled for four thousand years in this extensive empire, and the descendants of Mussulmans who ruled here for several hundred years, should have so far fallen from our ancient state, that we should have to argue our capacity for even a limited measure of autonomy and self-rule. But there is so much ignorance among those who have got a determining voice in the affairs of our country at present that, if I but had the time, I would tell them something of the capacity of our peoples —Hindus and Mussulmans—till the advent of British rule in India. I may refer those who care to know it, to the papers published at pages 581 to 624 of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji's book on 'Poverty and un-British Rule in India'. I will content myself with saying that one-third of India, comprising a population of nearly 60 millions, is still under Indian rule, and that the administration of many of the Indian States compares favourably with that of British India.

Has the fact of our being under British rule for 150 years rendered us less fit for self-rule than our fellow-subjects in our Indian States are? Are a people who can produce a scientist like Sir J. C. Bose, a poet like Sir Rabindranath Tagore, lawyers like Sir Bhashyam Iyengar and Sir Rash Behari Ghosh, administrators like Sir T. Madhava Row and Sir Salar Jung, judges of the High Court like Sir Syed Mahmood and Telang, patriots and public men like Dadabhai Naoroji, Ranade, Pheroze Shah Mehta and G. K. Gokhale, industrialists like J. N. Tata and his worthy son Sir Dorab Tata and a servant of humanity like Mr. M. K. Gandhi and soldiers who have rendered a good account of themselves in all the theatres of war, unfit for a measure of self-government in their domestic affairs? I hope that the insult of such an assumption will no longer be added to the injury that is being done us by our being kept out of our birthright to self-government, and that the principle of self-determination will be extended to India.

THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION

Ladies and Gentlemen, let us make it clear what we mean when we talk of self-determination. There are two aspects of self-determination, as it has been spoken of in the Peace proposals. One is that the people of certain colonies and other places should have the right to say whether they live under the suzerainty of one power or of another. So far as we Indians are concerned we have no need to say that we do not desire to exercise that election. Since India passed directly under the British Crown, we have owned allegiance to the Sovereign of England. We stand unshaken in that allegiance. We gladly renewed our allegiance to His Majesty the King-Emperor in person when he was pleased to visit India in 1911 after his Coronation in England. We still desire to remain subjects of the British Crown. There is, however, the second and no less important aspect of self-determination, namely, that being under the British Crown, we should be allowed complete responsible government on the lines of the Dominions, in the administration of all our domestic affairs

We are not yet asking for this either. We are asking for a measure of self-government which we have indicated by our Congress-League scheme of 1916. We urge that the measure of self-government, *i.e.*, of responsible government, to be given to us should be judged and determined in the light of the principle of self-determination which has emerged triumphant out of this devastating war. In order that this should be done it is not necessary that the proposals of reform which have been elaborated by Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford should be laid aside and a brand-new scheme be prepared. The Special Congress and the Moslem League have expressed their willingness to accept those proposals with the modifications and improvements which they have advocated. This great Congress representing the people of all classes and creeds—Hindus, Mussulmans, Parsis and Christians—representing all interests, landholders and tenants, merchants and businessmen, educationists, publicists and representatives of other sections of the people is assembled here to-day to express the mind of the people on this question. One special and particularly happy feature of this Congress is the presence at it of nearly nine hundred delegates of the tenant class who have come at great sacrifice, from far and near, to join their voice with the rest of their countrymen in asking for a substantial measure of self-government. The representative Congress of the people of India will determine and declare what in its opinion should be the measure of reform which should be introduced into the country. Let the British Government give effect to the principle of self-determination in India by accepting the proposals so put forward by the representatives of the people of India. Let the preamble to the Statute which is under preparation incorporate the principle of self-determination and provide that the representatives of the people of India shall have an effective voice in determining the future steps of progress towards complete responsible government. This will produce contentment and gratitude among the people of India and strengthen their attachment to the British Empire.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I think I have said enough to show how strong is our case on the ground of justice for a substantial measure of Responsible Government. While we have noted with thankfulness the attitude of British statesmen towards the cause of Indian Reform, while we have noted with satisfaction that in their election manifestoes Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Asquith, in short, leaders of all parties in the United Kingdom, have pledged themselves to the introduction of Responsible Government in India, we regret to find that a Limited Liability Company of businessmen known as the Indo-British Association have organised themselves in London with the distinct object of opposing the cause of Indian Reform. (*Cries of 'shame, shame'.*) This Indo-British Association and other narrow-minded European and Anglo-Indian bodies in India and in England, who are opposed to any power being transferred to Indians have been misusing the Rowlatt Committee Report to create a wrong impression in the minds of the British public that the people of India are disaffected towards the British Crown. This is a wicked attempt. One should have thought that with the overwhelming evidence of the loyalty of the people of India to the British Crown, fresh in the minds of the English people and of the Allied world, not even the worst detractors of Indians would venture to make such a dastardly attempt at this juncture. The Rowlatt Committee itself has brought the fact of that loyalty into great prominence. The Committee have summed up their conclusions as follows :—

We have now investigated all the conspiracies connected with the revolutionary movement. In Bombay they have been purely Brahmin and mostly Chitpavan. (I am quoting from the Report and not expressing my own opinion.) In Bengal the conspirators have been young men belonging to the educated classes. Their propaganda has been elaborate, persistent and ingenious. In their own province it has produced a long series of murders and robberies. In Bihar and Orissa, the United Provinces, the Central Provinces and Madras it took no root but occasionally led to crime or disorder. In the Punjab the return of emigrants from America bent on revolution and bloodshed produced numerous outrages and the Ghadr Conspiracy of 1915. In Burma too the Ghadr movement was active but was arrested. Finally came a Muhammadan conspiracy confined to a small clique of fanatics and designed to

overthrow British rule with foreign aid. All these plots were directed towards one and the same objective—the overthrow by force of British Rule in India. Sometimes they have been isolated, sometimes they have been encouraged and supported by German influence.

Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, assuming that the whole of this statement is correct, let us see what the Committee say further about these plots. They say: "All have been successfully encountered with the support of Indian loyalty." (*Hear, hear.*) This should be enough to silence the calumniators of India. Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford observed in their report on Indian Constitutional Reforms: "Whatever qualifications may be needed in the case of particular classes, the people of India as a whole are in genuine sympathy with the cause which the Allies represent. However much they may find fault with the Government, they are true in their loyalty to the British Crown." In another place they truly observed: "The loyalty of the country generally was emphasised by the attempts made by a very small section of the population to create trouble." I most sincerely deplore, as I am sure every thoughtful Indian does, that any of our youths should have been misled into what the Rowlatt Committee have described as a movement of perverted religion and equally perverted patriotism. I deplore that even a few of our young men should have been misled into criminal organisation or conspiracy against the Government. I equally deplore that they should have committed any acts of violence against any of their fellow-men. But let not the misdeeds of a small number of unfortunately misguided youths be pitted against the unswerving loyalty of 320 millions of the people of India. It is not fair.

But unfair though it is, our opponents are making a strenuous endeavour to defeat the cause of reform or to whittle down the reform proposals by misrepresenting us and it is necessary for us to correct their misrepresentations and to show how strong is the case for reform. We have to emphasise that apart from any considerations of the Government here being a good or bad Government, we are entitled to have self-government as every other nation is.

entitled to have it. (*Hear, hear.*) Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman said years ago that "good government is no substitute for self-government." Speaking in the House of Commons at a much earlier period, in the thirties of the last century, Macaulay truly observed that "no nation can be perfectly well governed unless it governs itself". No arguments are therefore needed to justify our request that we should also be allowed to govern ourselves. The justice of our case is overwhelmingly strong. With all the advantages that it has, and which we gladly and gratefully acknowledge, the system of Government which has been introduced into India, has numerous defects in it. We have acknowledged its good points repeatedly; we have also pointed out its weak points repeatedly. By way of illustration I will invite attention to some of these here. Every nation is entitled to administer its own affairs. It follows that the people belonging to the Indian nation should manage their own affairs. As I said before, when the British Government was established in this country, their idea was that their rule should be temporary, only to enable Indians to regain, to readjust their lost balance and be able to take charge again of their own affairs. A number of British statesmen have said that they were only the guardians of the welfare of the people of India. But the system of administration which has been established is opposed to this idea. Under it, European Agency has been introduced into the administration in such an enormous measure that all the services are dominated in the higher branches by Europeans. The result has been that opportunities have not been given to Indians to exercise the power of administration, which alone could enable them to exercise power successfully and satisfactorily, and Europeans have been imported in large numbers from England, not only for the Military Services but also for the Civil Services. At present the position is, and has been from 1833, when the statute was passed, that the statute declares that no Indian subject of His Majesty would be debarred from obtaining, or holding any appointment, for which he is qualified. This is a rule for which we have often expressed our gratitude. But, ladies and gentlemen,

in justice the rule should have been different and more liberal so far as Indians are concerned. It should have been that Indians should be employed in the various public offices of their country, and that only where circumstances made it necessary, should Europeans, who possessed expert or special knowledge, be employed in any department. Thus the correct rule which should have been followed has not been followed. In spite of the Statute of 1833, very few Indians were appointed. Then came the Mutiny and the Indian Civil Service Act was passed. It was decided that the examination for the Civil Service would be held in London only. For examining even Indians as to their qualifications for serving in India, the examination was to be held in England ! (*Cries of* '*shame, shame*'.) Indians prayed that the examination should be held at least at the same time in India also. A Committee appointed by the Secretary of State reported in favour of simultaneous examinations in both countries. But that recommendation has been disregarded. Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji spent sixty years of his life in agitating for this simple measure of justice. It is painful to remember that he died without seeing it accepted. The result has been that though an agitation for the admission of Indians into all the higher departments of the public services of the country has been carried on for over sixty years, we have not yet got a fair footing in those services. At the time when the Public Services Commission reported in 1914, less than 10 per cent. of the posts were filled by Indians and over 90 per cent. were filled by Europeans. (*Shame.*) That was in the Indian Civil Service. In the other services also Europeans have had a practical monopoly of all the higher posts.

Then take the Military Services. For a long time past Indians have been urging that a fair number of commissions in the army should be thrown open to them. The demand has not been met. The Duke of Connaught recommended many decades ago that a military college should be established in India for training Indians as officers. Since the Congress met in 1885, it has repeatedly

urged that such a college should be established and commissions in the army should be thrown open to Indians. This was not done. I know it for a fact that when the Coronation Durbar was to take place in India in 1911, Lord Hardinge had recommended that the Kings' Commission should be thrown open to Indians. That was not done. Years rolled along, but the bare justice which the Indians had been praying for was not done. Then came the war. We offered, unanimously and from all sides, our loyal support to the Government. We urged that our soldiers should be sent to France and Flanders to fight in defence of the Empire and in vindication of the principles of liberty and justice. We also prayed with an unanimous voice that commissions in the army should be regularly thrown open to Indians. The war went on for three years without our last prayer being heeded. When Indian soldiers serving in the ranks had won Victoria Crosses, when they had again established their valour and fidelity in many fields, then came the announcement that 10 commissions in the army would be open to Indians *(shame)*, and only 5 persons, I understand, have so far been nominated to these commissions; for, four men were given only temporary commissions. We naturally feel that justice has not been done to us in spite of all that we have done during this war.

Ladies and Gentlemen, there are so many other matters in which our reasonable demands have not been conceded, in which justice has not been done to us. The administration has been unnecessarily expensive. In the Military Services and in the Civil Services, high salaries are paid, mostly to Europeans, and the country thus loses every year an enormous amount of money which should be distributed among its own children. If three-fourths of the expenditure on the European services were to be spent upon Indians, India would be in a far more prosperous condition than she is or can be in so long as the existing state of things continues. But our repeated requests for a reduction of high salaries is met by a further increase in those salaries and the substitution of Indians for Europeans is still a matter for further consideration.

Take again the question of education. We have been praying that education should be made universal and better. We have not been able to persuade the Government to do so. Mr. Gokhale introduced a bill to make it permissive for municipalities to make primary education compulsory. That bill was not allowed to pass. We acknowledge with gratitude all that the Government have done since then in the matter of education—primary, secondary, University. But we feel that what has been done is very small compared with what remains to be done.

Then there is the question of the poverty of the people and of public health. Poverty has been very deep and widespread. We have urged measures to remove it. There have been numerous famines during the last century, and we have lost millions of people from death from famines. Public health has been low. The mortality from plague has been very great. During the last 20 years we have lost many times more lives from plague than what have been lost during the whole of this devastating war in Europe. The vitality of our people is poor; the average duration of life is shortened. The whole situation is painful. As a partial but important remedy, we have urged and urged, the Famine Commission also urged, that indigenous industries should be promoted and encouraged. They did so in 1880. Since then the Congress has repeated the prayer, but that prayer has not been listened to. It was only when the war broke out that the Industrial Commission was appointed and you have only to read its report to realise how great, how sad, has been the loss which the country has suffered by reason of industries not having been encouraged. There are many other departments in which the existing system of Government has failed the people. Take for instance the question of currency. The needs of the great bulk of the people of India who owned their little savings in silver, were not sufficiently considered when the mints were closed to silver in 1893. In other respects also the needs of the people of India have not been met in the matter of currency and banking. I do not want to prolong the list. My object in drawing attention

to these is to emphasise the fact that the bureaucratic system which exists at present has failed. While we gratefully acknowledge that it has achieved a good deal, while we acknowledge all the good that it has done, we say that it has failed very largely to promote the welfare of the people as it should have promoted. I cannot express this idea better than in the words of Lord Mayo who said many years ago :

> We have not done our duty to the people of this land. Millions have been spent on the conquering of the race which might have been spent in enriching and in elevating the children of the soil. We have not done much and we can do a great deal more. We must first take into account the inhabitants of the country. The welfare of the people of India is our primary object. If we are not here for their good, we ought not to be here at all. (*Hear, hear.*)

This was said by Lord Mayo nearly fifty years ago. Of course things have improved in some directions ; but a great deal more yet remains to be done. This is a very brief and imperfect summary of our complaint against the system which exists, and it is our settled conviction that self-government is the only remedy. It is therefore that we press for it with all the earnestness we can command.

And now, Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish to put in a word of appeal here to the Indian Civil Service. I was surprised and pained as I am sure you all must have been, to read a circular issued by the Secretary to the Indian Civil Service Association or some body like that in Bihar, asking them for an organized expression of opinion on behalf of the Civil Service with regard to the Reform proposals. Of course everybody is free and every civilian as much as any one else, to hold, and if he so chooses, to express his individual opinion about any matter in which he feels interested. But that members of the Indian Civil Service should as a service organize a united expression of their opinion against the Reforms, is a thing which has shocked Indian sentiment. The circular points out that an impression has gained that the Service is favourable to the proposals and that this effort has been made to remove that impression or correct it. The circular further says that such an effort is being

made in every province. I appeal to the members of the Indian Civil Service to think whether this is a right course for them to pursue in the matter of constitutional reforms in India. They have covenanted to serve India. Many of them have served her well and we feel grateful to them for it. Many Indian Civil Servants have laid India under a deep obligation. We cherish the honoured name of Allen Octavius Hume (*applause*) who was the founder of the Indian National Congress. We revere the memory of the godly Sir William Wedderburn (*applause*) who devoted all his time up to the last moment of his life to the promotion of the good of India. We have the respected name of Sir Henry Cotton (*applause*) whose lifelong service to this country will not easily be forgotten. Even now there are many members of the Indian Civil Service retired, and even in the Service itself, who are really and truly the friends of the people of India. I expect every fair-minded man among them will agree that any attempt made by the Service as a body to prejudice the cause of reform or to oppose it, will be a matter for most serious complaint to the people of India. We look forward to their co-operation in any measure of reform that may be introduced. We hope that the advice which Lord Hardinge gave them would be remembered by them, and that they would all put their intellect and strength of character in supporting liberal reforms and making them successful rather than in opposing them or getting them whittled down. I have already referred to the misuse which is being made by some of our opponents of the Rowlatt Committee's recommendations. There is also unfortunately the opposition organized in England by the British Indian Association and the opposition of Europeans in this country. If the Indian Civil Service will at this critical juncture throw in their united weight against the proposals for reform, it would be a matter of which India will have serious reason to complain. This is a juncture when it is necessary that the cause of India should be correctly and faithfully represented, and we expect that Members of the Indian Civil Service will stand up for the interest of India and of Indian, for justice to the people of the country in the service of which

they have enrolled themselves and spent the best of their years.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have shown that we have many complaints against the existing bureaucratic system. I have also said that self-government is the only remedy. It is our conviction that if we Indians had an effective share in the administration of our affairs, we should have managed things very differently. How we should have managed them is not a mere matter of conjecture, but is clearly shown by the resolutions that we have passed during the last 32 years in regard to many questions of public interest. Those resolutions show that if we had an effective voice, an effective control in the administration of our country's affairs, we would probably have achieved at least half as much progress as the Japanese have achieved, that our people would have been more prosperous, more contented, and in every way more happy than they are at present. We ask for this opportunity of national self-development, and trust that our British fellow-subjects, including those in the Indian Civil Service, will support and help us in this demand. It is particularly necessary that they should help us against those who are misrepresenting us and making a misuse against us of the recommendations of the Rowlatt Committee. I have expressed before this my whole-hearted condemnation of the ways pursued by some of our misguided youths. I deplore that they were misled. But what is now of importance is to remember the circumstance under which evil tendencies grew up among them. I would ask every Englishman who considers this question to make a mental survey of what passed in India from the period of 1897 to 1915. I would ask him to remember that it was the Plague Administration in Poona that gave rise to alarm and resentment among the people and led to the unfortunate murder of two Englishmen and to the deportation of the Natu Brothers. I would ask him to remember the repressive measures which were adopted to put down the agitation against the partition; also the various other repressive measures passed between 1897 to

1915. I will then ask him to consider what has been done by the Government in the same period in the matter of reforms and in redressing the grievances of Indians. He will have to recognise that while on the one side there were causes created for discontent, the reasonable demands which Indians had been making were not granted. Our industries were not encouraged. The difficulty in finding careers for our young men was growing. Education was not sufficiently spread; poverty was increasing; racial inequality was kept up between Europeans and Indians; there were invidious distinctions made between Indians and Europeans in the services and in the matter of bearing arms. All these causes contributed to a state of feeling which might well lead, deplorably but pardonably lead, some Indian youths into the paths of sedition. If our English friends will bear these facts in mind, I think they will arrive at a juster judgment than they are likely to do otherwise. All that I would say to them is that the remedy for the state of things which the Rowlatt Committee deplore, assuming their conclusions to be correct, lies not in forging any repressive legislation but in granting large and liberal measures of reform (*hear, hear*), which will remove the root-causes of discontent and promote contentment and satisfaction among the Indian people.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have already tried your patience hard and I would not detain you longer. But before I conclude let me say one final word to you. The situation is this. Our cause is just; the opportunity for pressing it is favourable. But our opponents are strong and well-organised. There is great need of sending a strong deputation to England so that our cause may not suffer for want of good and proper advocacy. (*Hear, hear.*) I hope therefore that you will decide to send such a deputation at an early date. But the strength which your deputation will possess, the influence which it will exercise, will be derived from you. So it is the organization which you will create in India, the solid sentiment upon which your political organization will be built up here, which will

determine the strength and influence which your deputation will have in England. To that end I ask your attention to the one principle which seems to be very much in favour with you just now. And that is the principle of Self-determination. You have asked that the British Government should extend the principle of self-determination to India in her political reconstruction. I ask you, my brothers and sisters, to apply that principle to your affairs so far as it lies in your power. I ask you to determine that henceforward you shall be equal fellow-subjects of your British fellow-subjects and equals of all the rest of your fellow-men in the world. *(Hear, hear and applause.)* I ask you to determine that hereafter you will resent, and resent most strongly, any effort to treat you as an inferior people (*hear, hear*). I ask you to determine that henceforward you will claim, and claim with all the strength that you command that in your own country you shall have opportunities to grow as freely as Englishmen grow in the United Kingdom. (*Hear, hear.*) If you will exercise this much of self-determination, and go about inculcating these principles of equality, of liberty and of fraternity among our people, if you will make every brother, however humble or lowly placed he may be, to feel that the ray Divine is as much in him as in any other man, however highly placed he may be; if you will make every brother realise that he is entitled to be treated as an equal fellow-subject, you will have determined your future for yourself, and then those who are in power will not long be able to resist any of your reasonable demands. I ask you, my brethren, to give this matter your most earnest consideration. You have got the opportunity now. The scheme of reforms which has been proposed gives you the opportunity. Whatever may be the powers which may be entrusted to Provincial and Central Governments, electorates must be formed and Councils must be expanded. The formation of electorates gives you the best chance to instruct every one of your fellow-men in the political principles which you wish he should understand and follow, and upon which our future construction should rest. I appeal to you to begin your

efforts, to organize and instruct our future electorates, that is to say our fellow-men who will exercise the power that we seek should be given to them. I appeal to you to establish Congress Committees in every taluka and every tehsil and see that the people understand these principles. If you will do this, if you will work in that spirit with that determination, if you will show that much of self-determination and work unitedly with one purpose, I am sure, God will grant us self-determination earlier than we many of us imagine we are going to get it. (*Loud and prolonged cheers.*)

Thirty-fourth Congress—Amritsar—1919

PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU

FELLOW-DELEGATES,—It is indeed an exceptional honour to be thought fit to take the helm of the great ship of the Indian National Congress in the stormy weather we are passing through. The honour you have conferred on me is deserved only by a skilled pilot, who can afford to make light of the breakers and the rocks ahead. I wish your choice had fallen on one, who had both the skill and the confidence to steer clear of all danger the noble vessel you have so generously committed to my care, when it is about to sail on a perilous voyage. But all too unworthy as I am for the great distinction you have bestowed on me, I derive solace from the fact that there is a special feature of this session, which no doubt has influenced your choice, and which perhaps widens the qualification for the chair to include even such as I. That special feature presents itself at the outset and runs through our whole programme. It arises out of the recent tragic events in the Punjab which must naturally form the keynote of our proceedings. Those events furnish many a dark chapter to the history of the past twelve months, but none darker than the great tragedy enacted in this very city of Amritsar in April last. Fellow-delegates, you have assembled here in deep mourning over the cruel murder of hundreds of your brothers and in electing your president you have assigned to him the position of chief mourner. That position I accept in all reverence and I sincerely thank you for it. The responsibility, however, remains and is considerably augmented by the great solemnity of the occasion. I can only hope to discharge it by your generous indulgence and the kindly co-operation

which I trust I shall receive at your hands in a very liberal measure.

Last year when we met at Delhi, the great war had ended and we were all looking forward, full of hope, to the great peace which would endure and which would bring the blessings of freedom to all nationalities. The time had come for the fulfilment of the many pledges made to us and, in accordance with the principles laid down by statesmen in Europe and America, this Congress demanded self-determination for our country. Peace has now come, partially at least, but it has brought little comfort even to the victors. The pledges made by statesmen have proved but empty words, the principles for which the War was fought have been forgotten and the famous fourteen points are dead and gone. *Vae victis* is still, as of old, the order of the day. Russia, hungering for peace, is allowed no respite, and a number of little wars are waging on the continent of Europe. Prussianism has been crushed but it has been reborn in the other countries of the West, which have enthroned militarism on high. The fate of Turkey hangs in the balance, and Ireland and Egypt are being made to feel the might of the British Empire. In India, the first fruits of the peace were the Rowlatt Bills and Martial Law. It was not for this that the war was fought, it was not for this that many hundreds of thousands laid down their lives. Is it any wonder that the peace has aroused no enthusiasm and that the vast majority of the people of India have refused to participate in the peace celebrations ?

With coercion has come concession. That has been the old time policy in India, as in Ireland, persisted in by England in spite of repeated disillusionment. Our rulers have failed to realise that repression and conciliation cannot go hand in hand ; that the grace of a gift lies more in the manner of giving than in the thing given. And so the much discussed Reform Bill has been hurried through Parliament so that this "big meeting", as Mr. Bonar Law put it, may be pacified by it to a certain extent at least. The new Act demands our most careful consideration. I

shall deal with it at a later stage and it will be for you to decide how far it meets with your wishes.

IN MEMORIAM

But before we proceed further, we must pause for a moment to pay our tribute of respect to the memory of one of our leaders who has passed away from our midst since we last met in Delhi. Nawab Syed Mohammad, the President of the 28th Congress, held in Karachi in 1913 and for many years the Joint General Secretary of the Congress, died in Madras on the 13th February last. He was one of our foremost public men and had the courage to adopt the Congress creed at a time when the great majority of our Mahommedan brothers were keeping aloof from the national movement. May his soul rest in peace!

We must also do reverence to the sacred memory of the dead who were killed in Amritsar and elsewhere in the Punjab, and to the living who were put to indignities worse even than death and suffered the most shameful barbarities. No monument in marble or bronze is needed to consecrate their memory. Our speeches here will be forgotten, the resolutions you pass may in the future have interest only for the historian, but India will never forget the sacrifice and the sufferings of these children of hers.

THE PUNJAB

As I have already indicated the Punjab has the right to claim the first attention of this Congress. But before I deal with the various problems which it presents for our consideration I desire to congratulate you heartily, my fellow-countrymen and women of the Punjab, and more specially those of Amritsar, for the courageous public spirit you have shown in holding the present session of your great National Assembly in this city. You resolved in happier times to invite the Congress to your Province, little dreaming of the dark days you were destined to go through before you were to realize your expectations. You lost no time in forming your Reception Committee and were cheerfully busying yourself with your patriotic work when a great calamity suddenly descended upon you. You have

borne this affliction and at the same time have adhered to your resolve. Your spokesman at Delhi, who invited the Congress, lies in jail together with many of his colleagues. Yet you have not flinched or sought to cast aside the burden you had voluntarily undertaken. All honour to you for your devoted patriotism. All praise for your patient suffering.

India has suffered much at the hands of an alien and reactionary bureaucracy, but the Punjab has in that respect acquired a most unenviable notoriety. Competent observers have borne testimony to the spirit that has animated the Punjab administration ever since it came under British rule. Sir Henry Cotton and Mr. Bernard Houghton, both eminent members of the Indian Civil Service, have told us of the retrogressive and backward condition of the province and the militarist tendencies which hold sway there. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, in his book "The Awakening of India", says:

> It is generally conceded in India that the most incompetent of the Governments is that of the Punjab. It takes its stand upon two foundation rocks, "Prestige" and "Sedition," the meaning of the former being that it can do what it likes, and of the latter that if any Indian questions its doings his house will be raided and he will be deported. . . . . It has no notion of statesmanlike handling, no idea of political methods. The man in power simply uses his power whether it is in the form of a not too honest detective department or a not too discriminating executive or judiciary.

The proximity of the Punjab to the frontier has enabled its administrators time and again to enforce their will on successive Viceroys and Secretaries of State. The bogey of the frontier is exploited to the uttermost and the proposals made by the "man on the spot" seldom fail to secure acceptance at the hands of the higher authorities. With Delhi almost on the border and with Simla for its summer capital, the Government of the Punjab has the additional advantage of having the ear of the Viceroy, and it has thus come about that being the worst Government in India, it is the most favoured of all provincial administrations. Public life is not likely to thrive under these

conditions and it is no wonder that for long there was no marked growth of political ideas in the Punjab.

In order to appreciate the causes which ultimately led to the catastrophe of April last and its sequel, it is desirable to consider briefly the forces which have been at work ever since the first pulsations of public life began to be noticed by the authorities. Before 1905 there was practically no public life in the Punjab, but the stupendous blunder of Lord Curzon in effecting the partition of Bengal in the face of a nation's resentment not only convulsed the affected province but sent a thrill of excitement and discontent throughout the country, which could not fail to arouse public activity in the Punjab. The introduction of the Colonization Bill in the local Legislative Council shortly after brought trouble to the very doors of the people. By this bill it was intended to curtail the valuable vested rights of the so-called colonists and to deprive them of the fruits of their labour which had converted the desolate wilds around Lyallpur into a smiling garden. A strong agitation followed and this was dealt with by the usual policy of repression. About this time the editor and proprietor of the *Punjabee* newspaper were convicted. Shortly after, the Colonization Bill was passed by the local Council. But these measures failed to put down the agitation which was continued with redoubled energy. The more excitable among the people came into conflict with the police and there were riots in Lahore and Rawalpindi in April 1907. Against the arrest and trial of the actual rioters no sensible person can have anything to say but there was no justification for the arrest of Lala Hansraj Sawhney and some other leading public men, as was shown at their trial. Even less excusable was the deportation without trial of Lala Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh. The policy of the Punjab Government in those days, and handed down as a legacy to succeeding Lieutenant-Governors, was to shut their eyes to their own reactionary administration and keep the Government of India and the Secretary of State in ignorance of the real causes of the disturbances by supplying them with coloured

accounts and fixing responsibility for their own lapses on the poor "agitator". Be it said however to the credit of Lord Minto that he refused to assent to the unjust law passed by the Punjab Council. But there was no lack of other weapons of repression in the already over-stocked armoury of the Punjab Government and these continued to be freely used during the years 1907 to 1909. The methods adopted were the suppression of the press and the prosecution of individuals unacceptable to the Government. Needless to say the young sapling could not weather the continuous storm it was subjected to and there was little manifestation of public life in the Punjab during the years 1910 to 1913.

But repression and terrorism have never yet killed the life of a nation, they but increase the disaffection and drive it underground to pursue an unhealthy course breaking out occasionally into crimes of violence. And this brings further repression and so the vicious circle goes on. No one can but deplore violence and political crime. But let us not forget that this is the direct outcome of continued repression. It is due to the perversity of the executive which blinds itself to the causes of the discontent and, like a mad bull, goes about attacking all who dare to stand up against it.

Sir Denzil Ibbetson, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, during the troublous days of 1907, was not slow to perceive the "new air which was blowing through men's minds" but instead of adjusting his sails to this "new air" he chose to steer his course right against it. He, as well as his successor, followed the broad and easy path of piling repression on repression in accordance with the hallowed traditions of the Punjab Administration.

This was the state of the Punjab when her destinies were placed in the hands of Sir Michael O'Dwyer. It was a splendid opportunity for a broad-minded and generous-hearted statesman to strengthen the foundations of the Empire by doing the barest justice to the natural aspirations of a people to whom the Empire owed so much.

How Sir Michael acquitted himself of this high trust every Indian knows.

During the early days of Sir Michael O'Dwyer's rule occurred the *Komagata Maru* incident. The unfortunate men who had left their homes in a spirit of peaceful enterprise, many not wishing to return to India at all, found every door shut in their faces and were forced to return. The reception prepared for them by the Government of India, presumably at the instance of the Punjab Government, was the passing of the Ingress into India Ordinance, which empowered the Government to restrict the liberty of any person entering India. On landing in India they found themselves prisoners and, broken down as they were by the consistent ill-treatment they had received at home and abroad, they completely lost their heads and the unfortunate Budge-Budge riot was the result.

The *Komagata Maru* episode marked the recrudescence of unrest in the Punjab and afforded a pretext to Sir Michael O'Dwyer to ask for more "effective power" from the unwilling Government of Lord Hardinge. During 1914 and the early part of 1915 insistent demands continued to be made for a *carte blanche* to deal with the situation and a draft ordinance of a drastic character was submitted to the Government of India for approval and promulgation. At last Lord Hardinge was compelled to yield and the Defence of India Act which substantially embodied the provisions of this draft ordinance was hurriedly passed through the Indian Council. How this "essentially war measure" has been used not only in the Punjab but in the other provinces as well to deal with matters wholly unconnected with the War, we all know. Sir Michael O'Dwyer was not slow to utilise it and soon after reported its "salutary effect" to the Government of India.

The years 1915 to 1917 were occupied with various conspiracy trials by special tribunals constituted under the Defence of India Act. The vernacular press was ruthlessly suppressed and hundreds of persons were interned under

the Defence of India Act or the Ingress Ordinance. It was during this period that Lokamanya Tilak and Srijut Bepin Chandra Pal were prohibited from entering the province lest they should introduce the virus of Home Rule here. This order was recently withdrawn as far as Mr. Tilak was concerned and I am sure you will all join with me in offering a most cordial welcome to him here after his arduous labours in England for the cause. Mr. Bepin Chandra Pal is, I believe, still prohibited from coming here and we are thus deprived of his counsel and mature judgment at this critical juncture.

WAR ACTIVITIES

I now come to the war activities of the O'Dwyerian regime during which, in the name of patriotism and the Empire, methods were employed which were even worse than those I have so far noticed. These could only have been practised in the Punjab either by the direct sanction or connivance of Sir Michael O'Dwyer or by over-zealous subordinates in the hope of reward. The truth of the Persian saying—

> If a king tolerates one grain of oppression,
> His retinue will inflict a ton of misery,

was fully realised in the course of this strenuous period. For a short time after the beginning of the War, recruitment in the Punjab proceeded under normal conditions. But soon after Sir Michael O'Dwyer made up his mind to acquire the distinction of being the foremost recruiting sergeant in India, gentle persuasion gave place to more vigorous methods. Then came the Prime Minister's appeal for increased war effort. Sir Michael O'Dwyer's energies now knew no limits. In his speech in the Punjab War Conference, he said :—

> You know the Delhi programme. My application of it to the Punjab I can explain in a single sentence. Two hundred thousand men for the regular army, voluntaryism if possible, conscription if necessary, twice the thousand men we have been asked for for the Indian portion of the Indian Defence Force, a war loan effort which will eclipse the last, the development to the utmost of our local resources, and by God's grace, victory in the end.

These are noble words breathing a lofty patriotism for the Empire. But what regard was paid to the capacity of the province to fulfil the expectations of its ruler? At the Delhi Conference the total number of men to be supplied by India was determined to be 5,00,000. Of these, Sir Michael O'Dwyer made up his mind to find no less than 40 per cent. from his own province, the population of which including the Indian States is only 13 per cent. It was too big an undertaking even for the martial races of the Punjab who had already contributed over 2,50,000 combatants and 70,000 non-combatants, since the commencement of the War. Hence the broad hint conveyed in the words "voluntaryism if possible, conscription if necessary." The various officials engaged in recruiting lost no time in translating those words into action and the horrors committed in the guise of patriotic effort are still fresh in the memory of the victims. An ingenious "quota system" was devised under which a rough census of the male population of every village was taken and each village was called upon to furnish a certain number of recruits within a fixed time. If the required number was not forthcoming within the time given various unlawful and oppressive methods were employed. Villages were punished collectively and individuals were subjected to great hardships and humiliation. I shall not here enter into any details as the Commissioners appointed by your Sub-Committee are enquiring into these cases of ill-treatment and will present to you their report in due course.

The Criminal Law was openly abused and numerous proceedings were taken against innocent men under the provisions of Sections 107 and 110 of the Code of Criminal Procedure with the sole object of compelling the accused persons either to enlist or to supply recruits. There are judicial records in existence showing that those who did either the one or the other were acquitted while those who did neither were convicted. In the report on the administration of Criminal Justice for 1917, it is stated:—

District Magistrates have spent much time in recruiting work during the year. The large decrease in the number of persons

called upon to give security under Section 110 Criminal Procedure Code is in a great part due to the heavy recruiting for the army.

In the report for 1918, it is again stated :—

Recruiting for the army continued to be one of the main factors in bad livelihood cases.

Nor was the abuse of law confined only to bad livelihood cases. The following passage occurs in the judgment of the Sessions Judge of Karnal setting aside the convictions of the appellants by the District Magistrate :—

The various orders passed by the District Magistrate from time to time clearly show that if these appellants had also supplied recruits from among their near relations or if they were fit for enlistment themselves they would have been let off provided 20 recruits were made up from the village as was originally demanded from it.

Similar methods were employed to swell the provincial contributions to the War Loan. It will be interesting to prepare statistics to show how many subscribers found it necessary to transfer their war bonds at heavy discount soon after their subscriptions were announced. One of the favourite methods to deal with those who did not satisfy the authorities with their war effort either in supplying recruits or contributing to the War Loan was to enhance their income-tax. The following short extracts from the judgments of Collectors, rejecting objections to the enhancement, will be instructive :—

He (the objector) has three sons and will not enlist one of them. He has not subscribed to any war fund or war loan although he could easily do so.

Up to date he has not helped even by a single pie in any war fund or loan.

He is a miser and has not helped with a single pie in any war fund or loan.

The inevitable result of the systematic oppression, the main features of which I have described was to spread serious discontent throughout the province and it is not surprising that the pent up feelings of the people occasionally found vent in the commission of serious offences. We have it on record that a Tahsildar in the

Shahpur District was murdered and some of his companions sustained grievous hurt. In the same district a mob offered resistance to the arrest of some men on a charge of dissuading people from enlistment with the result that it was fired upon and several casualties occurred.

In a recent speech made in Multan, Sir Michael O'Dwyer expressed the lament that

> those who worked in organizing recruiting for the division have had a most arduous task; they have had to contend against apathy, timidity, and even with open hostility which in some cases unfortunately culminated into riot, bloodshed, and defiance of authority in Multan and Muzaffargarh.

Mr. Montagu in his last speech on the Indian Budget remarked :—

> Recruiting for the army has gone on in parts particularly affected by these disburbances with such zeal and enthusiasm that I think there is reason to believe that many a family was left without its bread-winner.

Did Mr. Montagu sufficiently realize the inwardness of the "zeal and enthusiasm" he referred to or the extent to which it was carried? The "unauthorised, objectionable and oppressive methods" employed by Zaildars and Lambardars under pressure of the authorities are described in the judgment of the Sessions Judge of Multan as "matters of common knowledge." It is evident that this "common knowledge" did not travel beyond the seas to England or we should have found some indication of it in Mr. Montagu's speech.

What I have so far said applies to all classes affected by recruiting and war loan activities and concerns mainly "the man on the sod, and the man behind the plough" for whom the late Lieutenant-Governor professed the warmest sympathy and solicitude. Let us now turn to another class of people for whom he never affected any feelings other than those of unqualified hatred and contempt—I mean the people known as the educated classes in general and the politically minded section of them in particular. I have already shown that public life was all but dead in the Punjab some years before Sir Michael O'Dwyer

appeared on the scene. It showed some signs of revival on his assuming charge of the province but was again put down by his masterful repression. There were, however, world forces at work which even the strongest man could not resist and the people of the Punjab whose "manliness, sanity, and practical common sense" the then Lieutenant-Governor was never tired of extolling for his own purposes could not remain unaffected. The famous Memorandum of the nineteen members of the Indian Council, the Congress-League Scheme of Constitutional Reforms, the historical announcement of the 20th August, 1917, the visit to India of Mr. Montagu himself and the publication of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report all came in quick succession to the utter bewilderment of Sir Michael O'Dwyer. He saw Congress Committees spring up in important centres, and heard the whole province ring with the echoes of speeches made at public meetings and conferences in the course of which his administration was freely criticised. Early in his career as Lieutenant-Governor, he had conceived an immense admiration for himself and his administration and so long as it was open to him he suppressed all talk of the slightest change or improvement. When that was made impossible by the announcement of the 20th August and the developments which followed it, he made highly offensive and provocative speeches in his own and the Viceroy's Council which served the only purpose of adding to the bitterness of feeling on both sides. Up to the end of 1918 constitutional reforms were the all absorbing topic at almost all public meetings and he could not well interfere with them. But early in 1919 came a terrible visitation in the shape of the Rowlatt Legislation which set a tremendous wave of agitation rolling in the country from one end to the other. It swept through the Punjab with the same volume and force as through other parts of India and gave Sir Michael O'Dwyer the opportunity he sought. The people were no longer offering criticism which was invited by the Government, but had engaged themselves in a strong agitation against a set policy which the Government had made up its mind to carry out at

all cost. This made all the difference with him and with the convenient bogey of the frontier to trot out in case of need, he prepared himself to deal the last effective blow.

THE ROWLATT LEGISLATION

It will be convenient for me here to say a few words about this most inequitable measure which even according to Mr. Montagu has met with "universal opposition throughout India." You must be perfectly familiar with the provisions of this Act and I shall only notice a few salient features which are enough to condemn it. It invests the Government with "emergency powers" to enable it to deal with anarchical and revolutionary movements. Part I of the Act supersedes the ordinary mode of trial by a special procedure when the Governor-General-in-Council is satisfied that it is expedient in the interests of public safety to provide for a speedy trial. This speed is attained by doing away with commitment proceedings and the right of appeal which in one word means speed at the expense of justice. It is impossible to underrate the importance of commitment proceedings which give fair notice to the accused of what the case against him is, and how the prosecution seek to prove it. As to the value of the right of appeal there can be no two opinions. The most remarkable feature of the Act in this respect is that no right of appeal is given even when the judges differ, the only consideration shown being that no sentence of death shall be passed if there is such difference of opinion.

Parts II and III are designed to deal with two classes of anarchical and revolutionary movements but the difference between them is only one of degree. Part II applies when such movements are "extensively promoted" and Part III when they are "prevalent to such an extent as to endanger public safety." But whatever the difference between the two it is impossible in any given case to show that the movement in question was of the one kind and not of the other. For all practical purposes, therefore, the

Governor-General-in-Council has a free hand in the matter and may proceed under Part II or III as he likes. The fact that a person is concerned in any movement of either kind is in the first instance to be determined behind his back and later on, when his case is referred to the investigating authority, he is to be given an opportunity to appear at *some stage* (not all the stages) of the proceedings, which are to be held in camera. The unfortunate person is not to be allowed to be represented by counsel, he may not be told the name of his accuser, nor even all the facts on which the accusation is based and is not entitled as a matter of right to examine any witness, or produce any document if the investigating authority considers it unnecessary. To crown all this the investigating authority shall not be bound to observe the rules of the law of evidence and there shall be no appeal from its finding. We then have the drastic powers given to Local Governments, which are milder under Part II than Part III but extend to the search of any place and confinement in jail of the person concerned.

These, Fellow-Delegates, are some of the staggering provisions of the new law against which the whole country rightly rose as one man. Because there are unfortunately in this country as there undoubtedly are in other countries, some misguided persons who endanger public safety, the whole nation must submit to the disgrace of allowing this terror to hang over it. It has been over and over again admitted that the great bulk of the population in India are law-abiding. The negation of law and justice which the Rowlatt Act represents could only be necessary to cover the inability or incompetency of the Government to cope with an evil which is by no means confined to India. The only justification pleaded is that the Act is not meant for the innocent and the law-abiding who need have no fear of its application to them. But it is conveniently forgotten that the sole judge of the innocence or guilt of any person, however high placed he may be, is the executive. And who can have faith in the executive if the safeguards imposed by law on them are removed? Our critics may, but let me tell them plainly that we do not. But it is said

that there are safeguards. The Local Government cannot proceed without first obtaining the opinion of a judicial officer qualified to be a High Court Judge. The obvious answer is that in the first place that opinion is to be based on one-sided evidence and in the second the Local Government is not bound by it. All it is bound to do is to consider the opinion. If this opinion is against the Government, but the latter is still satisfied that action is necessary, there is nothing in the Act to prevent it from applying either Part II or III as it likes. It is however pointed out that no Government would be unreasonable enough to disregard the opinion of the judicial officer whom it consults. After what has happened recently in the Punjab, and at different times in other parts of India, let no man ask us to put implicit faith in the reasonableness of Government measures and methods. What is possible for the Government to do it may do at any time. We cannot be satisfied until it is made impossible for it to depart from strictly constitutional lines. The next safeguard relied upon is the enquiry by the "investigating authority." As you have seen from the conditions under which that enquiry is to be held, it is nothing short of an unmitigated farce and can afford no real safeguard. The last argument in favour of the Act is that it is nowhere in force and will never be put in force unless occasion arises and then only in the part of the country where such occasion arises. Here again the only determining authority is the executive though in this case it is the Governor-General-in-Council. It may be said that under the new Reform Act there will be three Indians in the Executive Council and at least they may be relied upon. But the executive does not change its character by being English or Indian. The point is that no executive in the world, however competent it may be, has any business to usurp the jurisdiction of duly constituted law courts or deprive the people of the protection afforded by them.

Much has been said of rumours and misrepresentations of the provisions of the Act. I confess that I have not come across them except in Government *communiques* and

some police evidences before the Martial Law Commissions. It is a remarkable fact that though these rumours were supposed to have emanated from the educated classes, not a single witness was called nor a single speech produced to fix any particular person with their authorship or circulation though the C. I. D. were everywhere in evidence. Indeed, one of the popular cries in the Punjab put the main provisions of the Act in a nutshell.

No pleader, no appeal, no argument.

This is as true a description of the Act as any that can be given in six words, though the author of it has been convicted and sentenced by a Martial Law Commission.

Mr. Montagu has sought to defend this measure in his Budget speech in the House of Commons. He has resorted to special pleading and instead of justifying the principle of the Act has plunged into a consideration of the necessity to deal with anarchical crime. Political crime has to be dealt with, has to be rooted out, but I repeat, what has been said so often before, that no number of Rowlatt Acts or other repressive measures will put an end to it. The one and only way to cast it out is to remove the causes of discontent.

The most amazing part of Mr. Montagu's defence of the Act came when on being interrupted by an hon. member on the question of the accused bring deprived of legal assistance, he said:—

Yes, Sir, under Part I of the Act he has assistance, but under Part II and III there is no legal assistance. This is not a law court but a committee of inquiry. It is more like a school master investigating trouble at a school, a committee of a club using its friendly services for the purposes of inquiry, somebody to explore all matters, somebody to see that injustice is not done, somebody to be sure that all the facts are investigated.

To compare the arrest and confinement without trial of a citizen, and numerous other restraints put on his liberty of action and speech, with the governance of a school or a club is, to say the least, adding a gross insult to a serious wrong. It can only be accounted for by the oft-repeated

complaint that Mr. Montagu has recently, in his zeal to push the Reform Bill through, lost all sense of preportion of other things Indian.

For these reasons I have no hesitation in asking you to express in no uncertain terms, what I know to be your considered opinion, that the Act is an ugly blot on the Indian statute book and must be removed without delay. The issue before us is, as Mahatma Gandhi has concisely put it, "Is the will of the people to prevail or that of the Government"? The very existence of this measure puts a stain on our self-respect and our national honour. But I feel confident that if you persist in your constitutional efforts you will get rid of it. For, as Mahatmaji says:

> A Government be it ever so powerful and autocratic is bound to yield to unanimous public opinion. It is a bad outlook before us if truth and justice have to surrender to mere physical force whether it is wielded by an individual or a Government.

I apologise to you, Fellow-Delegates, for having detained you even for the few minutes I have on the provisions of this inequitous measure. I have done so as this is the first opportunity for the Congress to pronounce its opinion on the Act and also because it marks the starting point of the recent trouble in the Punjab. I must not omit in this connection to express our keen appreciation of the high sense of public duty shown by those members of the Imperial Council who resigned their seats as a protest against the passing of the Act.

SATYAGRAHA

The Rowlatt Bills, bad as they were, were made even worse and more unacceptable to us by the environment in which they were set. Mahatma Gandhi rightly pointed out that they were "the unmistakeable symptom of the deep-seated disease in the governing body"—a disease which soon after broke out in all its virulence and naked ugliness. To fight this disease, Mahatma Gandhi started the great Satyagraha movement. A new force was introduced into our politics, a force with the most tremendous potentialities. India's masses were suddenly

awakened and the message of Satyagraha entered the humblest home. Some of us did not entirely agree with the wording of the Satyagraha pledge, many were of opinion that the time had not come for civil disobedience. But few, I imagine, can disagree with the essentials of the doctrine. These, as I conceive them, are truth, fearlessness and non-violence. And, as a corollary, I would add that it is the right of every man to refuse to obey any law which goes against his conscience and to which he cannot with due regard to truth submit, and to suffer the consequences for such disobedience. This is specially so where the laws are passed against the will of the people. I would here refer you to what an eminent American has said. Mr. Hadley, President of the Yale University, says :

> You can compel ignorant people to accept a statute, you can force bad men to obey it when they do not want to ; but if a statute or a judicial decision passes the line of those duties which good and intelligent men as a body accept and impose upon themselves, it is at once nullified. The process of nullifying law has sometimes been called passive resistance.

The qualities I have mentioned above, whether you call them Satyagraha or by any other name, are essential if we are to take our rightful place amongst the nations of the world. We shall not be free or deserve freedom unless we have these qualities in ample measure. Unless we adhere to truth and discard fear we cannot get rid of the slave psychology, the outcome of generations of repression, which has been our sad inheritance. And violence cannot avail us. That is the special weapon of the West and we cannot hope to win freedom by armed force. But even if we could do so it would be a barren victory, a victory which would degrade and coarsen us and make us less fit to enjoy the freedom we had so won. We would develop the same vices against which we are contending now and in our turn would start the game of repression.

The spirit of Satyagraha was nobly shown by the great and peaceful demonstration of the 6th of April. That day must remain a red letter day for India. It was the greatest

event of the year. Some persons, ignorant of history and Indian tradition, have likened the *hartal* to the general strike after the manner of the West, and have called it the forerunner of riot and bloodshed. But the *hartal* in India is a spiritual weapon, the old time method of showing sorrow, of having grievances redressed by patient suffering. It has from time immemorial been resorted to to express grief at a national calamity, sorrow at the loss of a loved citizen. It is not used as a threat, nor as a weapon against the forces of law and order. And this was fully shown on the Satyagraha Day when the mighty demonstration passed off peacefully without the slightest conflict with the police or military.

Some words of Mahatma Gandhi have been distorted to mean that the Satyagraha movement was the cause of the disturbances in India. Fellow-Delegates, I say most emphatically that this was not so. Neither Satyagraha nor the *hartal* was the cause except in so far as they greatly displeased the authorities and made them provoke the people. There was no civil disobedience of laws in the Punjab. Satyagraha flourished more in other parts of the country and yet there was no disturbance there. The *hartals* of the 6th April did not cause any breach of the peace. It was only after two popular leaders of this city had been suddenly deported and Mahatma Gandhi, the most revered Indian of the day, had been arrested, that the passions of the populace broke loose in certain parts of the country. That would have been so even without Satyagraha or *hartal*. The disturbances were the result of the action of the authorities. They knew full well, in the Punjab at least, that the consequence of their provocative action would lead to trouble and they took measures accordingly.

MARTIAL LAW AND AFTER

The events which followed must be fresh in your memory. Martial Law was enforced and for long the Punjab was almost cut off from the rest of the world. The truth was hidden from us and we had to rely on the one-sided accounts presented by Government

for our benefit. Outsiders were not permitted to enter the charmed area, even Mr. Andrews being turned out of the province. Within a few days of the declaration of Martial Law, the All-India Congress Committee demanded a full and impartial enquiry, and a little later appointed a Sub-Committee to conduct an enquiry. This Sub-Committee laboured for months and collected a great deal of evidence. It was hoped to present this evidence to the official committee which had been announced.

LORD HUNTER'S COMMITTEE

The appointment by the Government of India of Lord Hunter's Committee was most disappointing but we waived our substantial objections to it and decided to co-operate provided only full facilities were given to us to represent the people's case. At the earliest possible opportunity we urged upon the Government that the presence of the Punjabee leaders, who were in jail, was necessary for a fair enquiry. For many days we were in frequent communication with the Punjab Government and we were led to believe that our requests were being favourably considered by them. We refrained from going to the press in order to avoid embarrassing the Government and waited patiently for their answer. That answer came on the eve of the Hunter Committee's arrival in Lahore. You must have seen the correspondence subsequent to this and our Sub-Committee's statement which have already appeared in the papers, and I can add but little. I would only point out to you that we tried to meet the Government as much as possible. We modified our original request for the release of all the leaders during the enquiry and agreed to the presence of only one or two of them at a time *in custody* before Lord Hunter's Committee while evidence relating to them was being given. That was all we wanted and which the Government finally refused to give us. It was not an extravagant request. Even criminals have a right to be present in court during their trial. The Punjabee leaders are not being tried in the technical sense but their actions are being judged, they are being attacked by official witnesses and much of the blame

and responsibility for the disturbances is being cast on them. Yet they were not allowed the privilege of the meanest criminal, although the officials of Government, who are as much on their trial and have at least as much to answer for, have had the fullest opportunities of appearing before the Committee and conducting their case. Some of these officials have even been allowed the advantage of giving their evidence in camera. After the most anxious consideration, the Sub-Committee came to the conclusion that

> if it was to discharge the trust laid upon it, if it was to vindicate the national honour and the honour of the great Punjabee leaders, if it was to see truth and innocence established, it could not possibly engage in an enquiry in which the people's party was so heavily handicapped.

I feel confident that you will approve of and endorse the action your Sub-Committee took, and trust to its judgment in taking all necessary steps to obtain justice.

Meanwhile, Lord Hunter's Committee has pursued the even tenor of its way, roused occasionally by some particularly callous official admission. Their findings can but be *ex parte* decisions, based on the evidence of one party only. The other side of the shield will be presented to you by the Commissioners appointed by your Sub-Committee, who have strenuously laboured to collect and sift the evidence for the people. I do not overlook the fact that the proceedings of your Commissioners are in the legal sense as *ex parte* as those of Lord Hunter's Committee. There is however this to be said that your Commissioners have the additional advantage of considering the evidence given before the Hunter Committee. They have for good reasons deferred publishing their report and the evidence on which it will be based and this Congress will not have the advantage of having their considered opinion on the Punjab occurrences before it. This has also considerably handicapped me as in the absence of your Commissioner's report, it is somewhat difficult for me to deal with some aspects of Martial Law.

But whatever findings the Commissioners appointed by the Congress Sub-Committee may arrive at, the central

facts of the recent tragic events have now become so crystallised as to enable us to form an adequate idea of the true nature of the horrors through which the Punjab has just passed. These central facts are now matters of common knowledge and emerge clearly above the few controversial points which we may safely leave to our Commissioners. What we in this Congress are concerned with is not so much the fixing of individual responsibility for particular acts as the ascertainment of the spirit which runs through them all. I shall now by your leave touch on some of the main incidents and broad features of the occurrences which clearly indicate the spirit with which the people on the one side and the administration on the other were actuated.

AMRITSAR

I shall take the case of Amritsar which stands out more prominently than any other as affording in itself a complete illustration of the spirit on either side.

The people of Amritsar observed the 6th of April in the true Satyagraha spirit. So they did also the 9th April, the Ram Naumi day, and Mahomedans gladly and eagerly joined their Hindu brethren in celebrating the festival. There was no violence, no threats, and the processionists played the English National Anthem in honour of the Deputy Commissioner. That showed the psychology of the people of Amritsar on that Ram Naumi day, Hindus and Moslems observing the festival together, and both joining to do honour to the King-Emperor. The next few hours brought a strange transformation. The Bazaars were filled with mourning and the crowds that had rejoiced the night before, discarded their turbans and shoes in sorrow, for they heard that two of their loved leaders had been suddenly deported. And, after the old Indian fashion, they went unarmed and bare-headed towards the Deputy Commissioner's house to pray for the release of their leaders. They were fired at, some were killed and a number wounded. But I shall not here deal with the circumstances of or the necessity for this firing. Again the temper of the

crowd changed, and as is the way with crowds, it rapidly went to the other extreme. The passion for vengeance took possession of it and some parts of the mob committed those excesses for which we Indians cannot but hang our heads in shame. Whatever the treatment they had been subjected to, whatever the provocation offered, nothing can justify the murders which they committed, the shameful assault which they perpetrated on a defenceless woman, the arson and plunder of which they were guilty.

Yet again, the mood changed. After two or three hours of madness, the people, or rather such of them had been guilty of the outrages, recovered control of themselves. They saw the folly of their doings and, without the intervention of the police or military, of themselves stopped the destruction.

Such was the behaviour of the people of this city on those fateful days. The psychology of a crowd is a difficult thing to fathom, but I cannot but think that the history of those days would have been differently written if an attempt had been made to appreciate the view point of the people.

Let us now consider some of the doings of the officials and the spirit which actuated them. They did not appreciate the inner significance of Satyagraha or the *hartal*. To them it was all a vast conspiracy, the forerunner of a second mutiny. They did not care to see what troubled the people, they did not search for the causes of this mighty movement. They looked upon the closing of shops and the meetings and the demonstrations as a personal insult to them. Even the fraternisation of Hindus and Moslems was anathema, an act in the great conspiracy. We all know what it is in this country for a body of men to walk bare-headed and bare-footed. It is the sign of deep grief, a token of a great calamity. But our rulers neither understand nor care to study the feelings and emotions of those whom they look upon as a subject race. In his evidence before Lord Hunter's Committee, Mr. Miles Irving, who was Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar at the

time, was asked about the people who were proceeding to his house on the 10th. He stated :

> Yes, they were coming to my house, I understood. They were coming not to make any ordinary protest. When people come, they come properly clad, but these men had put off their *pugrees* and shoes and they intended violence.
>
> *Question.*—It might have been the sign of mourning ?
>
> *Answer.*—If it was mourning, it was violent mourning.

So, Mr. Miles Irving, after a life-time spent in the Indian Civil Service, thinks that the taking off of turbans and shoes is a sign of coming violence. Ignorance of the habits of a people is never excusable in one whose duty it is to govern them. It becomes criminal when it leads to grave consequences.

The sudden deportation of Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal was a typical act of our administrators. Having convinced themselves that there was revolution in the air, that conspiracies were being hatched, that the wonderful calm of the 6th and 9th of April hid strange currents underneath, they took the only step which appeals to the mind of a bureaucrat. They knew that this would greatly upset the people, they knew that there might be trouble, but what matter ? Could they not crush them with the " ample resources " at their disposal ? It did not strike them that the people could be reasoned with or could be conciliated. Nor did they think of having recourse to the ordinary law courts of the country. They do not believe in the intricacies or the delays of the law. They believe in making themselves the judges and meeting out swift and stern justice to their opponents.

THE JALLIANWALA BAGH

But saddest and most revolting of all was the great tragedy which occurred here on the Vaisakhi day. No Indian and no true Englishman can hear the story of the Khuni Bagh, as it is now aptly called, without a sickening feeling of horror. Our friend Mr. C. F. Andrews, to whom this province and our country is so much indebted, has described it " as a cold and calculated massacre ". He

says : "I have gone into every single detail with all the care and thoroughness that a personal investigation could command and it remains to me an unspeakable disgrace, indefensible, unpardonable, inexcusable." Such is the verdict of an Englishman. What words, Fellow-Delegates, can I use to express your feelings and mine whose kith and kin were mercilessly shot down by the hundred in cold blood ? Well may we grieve in the words of the Persian poet—

Our country is flooded with sorrow and woe.
O, for our land woe !

Arise and for coffin and cerements go !
O, for our land woe !
With the blood of our men killed in this pursuit
The moon shines red ;
Hill, plain, and garden blood-red glow ;
O, for our land woe !

The facts of this incident are before you, they have largely been admitted by the authorities. But I am not aware of any condemnation from the authorities. I do not know of any high official who has protested against this grim occurrence. That is a revelation of official mentality which staggers me. General Dyer, the author of the deed, has almost boasted of his achievement. He has sought to justify it. To him it was a "merciful act" to fire without warning on an inoffensive crowd because it might have made fun of him if he had refrained from doing so. He admits that he could have dispersed it without firing but that would have been derogatory to his dignity as a defender of law and order. And so, in order to maintain his self-respect, he thought it his duty to "fire and fire well" till his ammunition was exhausted and 2,000 persons lay dead and wounded. There ended his duty. It was none of his business, he tells us, to look after the dead and wounded. It was no one's business. The defenders of law and order had won a great victory, they had crushed the great rebellion. What more was needed ?

This is the deed which received the benedictions of Sir Michael O'Dwyer. This is the deed which has been

defended by official after official before Lord Hunter's Committee. The plea of necessity is raised, the plea that the massacre produced a good effect on the surrounding districts. We have heard of these excuses before when Louvain was razed to the ground, when atrocities were committed at Dinant and Termonde. For these crimes against humanity the late Kaiser and his underlings are going to be tried. But General Dyer is secure. His late chief has blessed him, and his colleagues in the civil and military administration of this country stand by him and applaud his deed.

CRAWLING

The shooting in the Jallianwala Bagh was not the only feat which General Dyer performed. His subsequent conduct was no less revealing of his perverted state of mind. He tells us that he "searched his brain" for a new punishment, a new terror for the people—something, as General Hudson put it in the Imperial Council, to "strike the imagination." And the punishment that was devised did credit to General Dyer's ingenuity and ferocity. It was worthy of the days of the Inquisition. All Indians who happened to pass through a certain lane were forced to crawl on their bellies like worms. This was the punishment meted out to all innocent and peaceful men who went that way because some hooligans had attacked Miss Sherwood in the lane some days before. No better method could have been devised to humble the people to the dust.

Of the other measures taken in Amritsar by General Dyer—the flogging in public places, the enforced salaaming, the cruel treatment of the best and most respected citizens—I shall not say much. They all tell the same tale of brutal terrorism, the attempt to crush the spirit of the people.

LAHORE

General Dyer was not the only apostle of this cult. There were many others who tried to rival his exploits in

the other districts under Martial Law. Lt.-Col. Frank Johnson, the expert from Bechuanaland, pursued the policy of "thoroughness" in the Lahore area. A "false and malicious" rumour that the Government intended to interfere with the marriage customs of the people was contradicted by an official *communique* from Simla and the contradiction was given due publicity. The rumour was set down as a base lie and a Mahomadan marriage was arranged in a village not far from Lahore. It so happened that the whole marriage party, including the bridegroom, the priests and the guests were flogged for having dared to assemble together during the Martial Law days. Col. Johnson has now been pleased to express his regret for this flogging and to tell us that it was due to the absence of tact in the official concerned. He himself exercised this "blessed virtue" by arresting 500 students and the professors of the Sanatan Dharma College and confining them in the fort because a Martial Law notice was damaged by some unknown person. He welcomed the opportunity of doing so, he "was looking for it." He tells us that he was waiting for an opportunity to bring home to the people the power of Martial Law. To him a walk of 16 miles daily for the students for three weeks in the scorching Lahore sun of April and May was no hardship. It was "ordinary physical training of a mild form." But perhaps the most noticeable example of the tact and mentalilty of Col. Johnson was his order prohibiting more than two Indians from walking abreast. He tells us:—

If more than two natives come and do not give way to a European, that is likely to lead to breach of the peace.

Question.—Who would commit the breach of the peace, the European?

Answer.—Undoubtedly.

Question.—You think he would be justified in doing so?

Answer.—Certainly.

And yet we are told of equal partnership in the Empire and are asked to rejoice over the peace which has given this to us!

GUJRANWALA

In Gujranwala, Col. O'Brien held sway, serene in the knowledge that he could do what he wished without let or hindrance. The Chief Secretary to the Punjab Government had assured him, even prior to Martial Law, that his actions would be subsequently validated. This simple fact furnishes a more illuminating commentary on the new Indemnity Act than all the learned arguments of Sir George Lowndes in the Imperial Council. We can now understand the whole-hearted support given to the measure by the Hon'ble the Chief Secretary to the Punjab Government and appreciate the wisdom of the provision in the Act which throws on the complainant the burden of proving want of good faith in the accused official when he is armed with a certificate from a Secretary to the Government.

One of the steps taken by Col. O'Brien on the assurance of the Chief Secretary was to arrest Gauhar Singh, a lambardar, aged 60 years. Col. O'Brien states:—

> Gauhar Singh himself had committed no offence but his two sons were wanted by the police and they were not forthcoming and that was why their old father was arrested. He told us that he did not know where his sons had gone. An order was also passed confiscating his property. The order stated that until the arrest of Gauhar Singh's sons his property would be confiscated, that he be dismissed from the post of lambardar, and any one touching his property or cutting his crops would be shot.

No comment from me is necesrary.

In Gujranwala, as you are all aware, the gentle art of bombing from aeroplanes was practised, a bomb being actually dropped on a school boarding-house full of boys. The manner in which bombs were dropped may be gathered from Lt. Dodkin's statement. He says:—

> I saw 20 or 30 people in a field talking to one another, and dropped bombs on them. I did not know who they were, whether they had assembled for an unlawful purpose, but I bombed as my orders were to disperse crowds.

Another part of this district has come to be known as the Bosworth Smith area in memory of the horrors it underwent under the rule of a member of the Indian Civil Service who for years past was in disgrace with the Punjab Government but was selected as specially qualified to administer Martial Law justice, and has since been rewarded by promotion.

KASUR

In Kasur, Capt. Doveton evolved fancy and novel punishments for the people and sought to teach them how to observe the ancient customs of India by touching the ground with their foreheads. He also had men stripped and flogged in the presence of prostitutes. His brother officer Lt.-Col. MacRae meanwhile amused himself by having school boys flogged in public in order to set an example to all evil-doers. The bigger boys were picked out at random, perhaps because they could bear the whipping better. They were not guilty of any offence, "it was their misfortune", Col. MacRae tells us, and I take it that the punishment he awarded was in good faith. All the male inhabitants, boys and men, ten thousand in number, had to present themselves for the identification parade. The men arrested, 150 in number, were put in a cage placed on the station platform, and a public gallows was erected, entirely at the instance of the Punjab Government, before any one was tried or condemned to death—so Col. MacRae informs us.

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

Besides the attempt to terrorize the people, the Punjab officials aimed a blow at the most valuable asset of our political life, the union between Hindus and Mohammadans. You are aware, Fellow-Delegates, of the pathetic scenes of fraternization between Hindus and Muslims which took place during the recent disturbances at Delhi, Lahore and other places accompanied with shouts of *Hindu Mussalman ki jai*. These expressions of fellowship in a common trouble were treated by the Punjab officials as heinous crimes amounting to open rebellion and waging war against

the King, and a new offence was created which was defined as " fraternization of Hindus and Mohammadans against the Government by law established". One of the most shameful acts of the Martial Law authorities was to ridicule the Hindu-Muslim *entente* publicly in various ways. The admission of Hindus to the Mahomedan mosques and of Mahomedans to the Hindu temples, the drinking of water or *sherbet* from out of the same glass by Hindu and Mahomedan were unmistakable signs of a far deeper union of the two than could be looked upon with equanimity by those who were interested in keeping them apart. And an attempt was made under official inspiration during the closing days of Martial Law to found separate political associations or *Sabhas* for Hindus, Mahomedans and Sikhs. I do not know what progresss has been made in this direction but I trust that my fellow-countrymen of all communities will refrain from swallowing this fatal bait.

I have referred you, Fellow-Delegates, to a very few of the admitted facts. It is not possible for me here to go into all the harrowing details of the numerous atrocities committed in the name of law and order. For these you will have to wait for the report of your Commissioners and the evidence they are collecting. Meanwhile I would beg of you to read carefully the evidence which has been tendered before Lord Hunter's Committee. I would request you to note the overbearing attitude of the official witnesses and their arrogance to the Indian members of the Committee. That will give you a greater insight into the official mind than any words of mine can convey. That will give you some idea of what our brethren in the Punjab have had to go through. And I would have you remember that those were the officers who presided over the Martial Law Summary Courts, who dispensed justice and inflicted heavy punishments and flogging.

NECESSITY FOR MARTIAL LAW

The question of the necessity or otherwise of the application of Martial Law to the situation which arose in

April last is a question on which also we must await the considered opinion of our Commissioners on all the evidence taken by them and that tendered before Lord Hunter's Committee. The Government case has been put as high as it possibly could be before the latter so far as the opinion of the authorities as to the real nature of the disturbances, and their apprehensions at the time as to what they might eventually lead to, are concerned. The point is whether their opinion and apprehensions were based on facts or were the result of panic. I shall abstain from embarrassing either our own Commissioners or Lord Hunter's Committee by offering at this stage any definite opinion of my own for your acceptance. But I think I am fully within my rights in pointing out that the question is not so much whether there was necessity for the application of Martial Law at any time as whether it was necessary when it was actually applied. It may be that Martial Law could be justified if it had been introduced at the time when the disturbances were actually going on, but it is an admitted fact that it was not so applied. What was done was to call on the military to help the civil administration, which is well within the discretion of every magistrate under our Criminal Law, but is very different from Martial Law. Whether or not it was necessary to hand over the entire civil administration to the military on the dates on which the Martial Law Ordinances and notifications relating to each district were issued is the next question before your Commissioners as well as Lord Hunter's Committee. I shall content myself with laying before you the official view. Mr. Kitchin, the Commissioner of Lahore Division, has stated that Martial Law was not wanted for the purpose of recovering control but in order to prevent the spread of infection, and specially for the speedy trial of the numerous persons who had been arrested. Mr. Miles Irving tells us that the necessity for the continuance of Martial Law did not depend on anything that happened in his district. It depended on outside factors, on the situation on the frontier. General Dyer tells us that the city, of Amritsar was "a model of law and order" after the 13th April.

Whatever the finding of your Commissioners and Lord Hunter's Committee as to the initial necessity for Martial Law may be, there is not the slightest doubt, on the admissions made by the official witnesses before Lord Hunter's Committee, that there was absolutely no justification for keeping it in force for the unconscionable length of time during which its horrors continued to be perpetrated. Admittedly it was not required to maintain law and order and the only justification pleaded, besides the old story of the dangers arising from the proximity of the frontier, is that it enabled the offenders to be brought to speedy justice. But the Government had ample powers under the statute law to constitute special tribunals for the trial of offenders and these would not have taken much longer to dispose of the cases than the Martial Commissions and Summary Courts did. The only difference would have been that people would have been saved the sufferings and indignities to which they were subjected under cover of Martial Law and that the accused would have had the advantage of defending themselves by counsel of their choice. The trend of the whole official evidence before Lord Hunter's Committee is that Martial Law was not required to meet the immediate necessities of the administration but merely for the purpose of striking terror into the hearts of the people, so as to avoid possible trouble in the future. I am of course not aware what secrets of State have been imparted to the Hunter Committee in camera by the Chief Secretary to the Punjab Government and General Hudson. But so far as the open proceedings before the Committee go, I can affirm with confidence that it was a gross abuse of Martial Law for which all concerned are liable to answer.

MARTIAL LAW CASES

I do not intend discussing any of the hundreds of cases disposed of by the Martial Law Commissions and the Summary and Area Courts. They have caused the greatest misery to the people, the suffering which endures. Hundreds still lie in jail, many for having done what no honest man need be ashamed of. You will have some

idea of the sentences inflicted when I tell you that 108 persons were sentenced to death and the aggregate sentences of imprisonment amounted to the stupendous total of 7,371 years and 5 months (allowing 20 years for a sentence of transportation for life). The figures for whippings, forfeitures, fines and impositions on villages and towns are not yet fully available. Those I have given for imprisonments have been compiled from the official statements presented to the Imperial Council. I am told that even these figures are incomplete and that the official statements do not contain many cases. Many of these sentences have been largely reduced by the present Lieutenant-Governor. Clemency has been shown where justice was needed. Injustice cannot be tempered with mercy. Sir Edward Maclagan is a kindly gentleman who has tried to mitigate the rigours of his predecessor's regime but he has not had the courage or the wisdom to break through the evil traditions he has inherited.

SIR MICHAEL O'DWYER'S RESPONSIBILITY

Such, in briefest outline, is the story of the Punjab. The responsibility of Sir Michael O'Dwyer for much that occurred here is admitted and established beyond doubt. I have endeavoured to show you the whole trend of his administration. It would appear that he was striving to make the Punjab a kind of Ulster in relation to the rest of India, a bulwark of reaction against all reform. "We now seem to be drifting into what is known as Birrellism in Ireland," he complained, "truckling to the extremists, encouraging the idea that we are going to hand over the administration to them." And even in his memorandum on the reforms he could not help lamenting that the Punjab politicians, "hitherto quiescent, were encouraged to assert themselves, and to come into line with other Provinces." To him there was little difference between a constitutional agitator and an anarchist. For both he had the same remedy—repression. But the remedy failed him and but increased the disease. And then he played his master-card and brought in Martial Law to kill once for all the breed that agitates. He has failed again in his endeavour,

but his policy has resulted in death for many and in utmost misery for thousands. For that he is fully responsible. He is responsible for the actions of General Dyer and his military colleagues in Amritsar ; he is also responsible for the doings of his subordinates in the other districts under Martial Law.

LORD CHELMSFORD'S RESPONSIBILITY

But what shall we say of Lord Chelmsford? He must have known, or ought to have known, what was happening in the Punjab. The Congress Committee repeatedly drew his attention to it. Did he seek to interfere or cut short the agony? Has he received or considered any representation from this afflicted province presented to him from any sources which are not strictly official? Has he shown us any sympathy? Has he even been into the heart of the province to acquaint himself by personal enquiry on the spot concerning the tragedies which have taken place? We have not even heard that his "heart has bled for Amritsar". Lord Chelmsford occupies a very exalted position. He has received that position at the hands of his King and as a trust from the English people. How has he served his King and fulfilled this trust? Has he faithfully and adequately discharged his duty to his King and to his fellow-countrymen by his persistent refusal to listen or to interfere, by his aloofness and by his absence from the scene of these happenings, when hundreds of His Majesty's subjects were done to death by the military and thousands put to shameful indignity?

Englishmen are, I believe, proud of the justice of British rule and zealous of their reputation. May I not ask them to consider whether Lord Chelmsford has shown himself an active guardian of their honour and worthy of the trust which they had reposed in him? Indians seek for justice at the hands of the British Democracy. Will they tolerate this "frightfulness" in India and shield the authors of it? That is the acid test of British policy in India. On the answer to that depends the future good will of the Indian people.

THE LESSON OF THE PUNJAB

Fellow-Delegates, I have ventured to trespass on your time to a considerable extent in dealing with the Punjab and the other matters which have acquired a special significance on account of the recent disturbances. Much has of late been said and written about the Punjab, much still remains. But the lessons which the crowded events of the year have to teach us and the English people are clear. To us they point to the path of steadfast endeavour, the path of sacrifice and patient ordeal. That is the only way to reach our goal. To Englishmen they teach the oft-repeated truth that tyranny degrades those who exercise it as much as those who suffer under it. And so it is that England of old, the champion of liberty, assumes a different guise in parts of her own dominions. England went to war to fight for the freedom of small nationalities, and yet a big nation under her sway continues to be unfree. In Belgium, the German doings were condemned, but in India we still have the pure milk of Prussianism. And the man governed by the Prussian idea is much the same whether he is in the west or in the east. The logic of force is the only argument which appeals to him ; military necessity justifies all severities. The object is always to strike terror and an act however " frightful " appears to him "merciful". Ordinary morality and humanity do not influence him and cruelty itself becomes laudable. It is for England to learn the lesson and put an end to conditions which permit these occurrences in her own dominions. If our lives and honour are to remain at the mercy of an irresponsible executive and military, if the ordinary rights of human beings are denied to us, then all talk of reform is a mockery. Constitutional reform without free citizenship is like rich attire on a dead body. Better to breathe God's free air in rags than be a corpse in the finest raiment.

THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT

I shall now proceed to consider the new Reforms Act which has just been ushered into an expectant world after much travail and bitter controversy. We have been told

by its sponsors in Parliament that it is a great measure, unique in English history, and that it gives us extensive powers. Some of our countrymen have welcomed it with open arms, others have condemned it. It is for this Congress now to consider it and formulate the country's verdict.

It has to be remembered that the situation which this Congress has to deal with is very different to what it was when the Special and Delhi Congresses met last year. Those Congresses had various schemes and proposals before them and it was open to them to accept such as appealed to them in the best interests of the country and reject others. The Montagu-Chelmsford proposals have now blossomed into an Act of Parliament and we must approach its provisions with all the respect due to the expressed will of Parliament which has been assented to by the Sovereign. The passing of the Act and the prospect of its being put into operation at an early date impose upon us here assembled the duty of examining its provisions with a view to laying down the policy for the country and the working of the electoral, political and administrative machinery, old and new. It does not however impose upon the Congress the duty to accept nor does it confer upon the Congress the power to reject the measures which Parliament has decided to introduce and carry out. In my humble opinion neither the report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee nor the proceedings of Parliament when it enacted the Bill into law furnish any reason for the Congress to reconsider and revise the verdict it gave last year on the true requirements of the country. In certain respects those requirements have been partially met, in others they have not been given the weight due to them either for reasons which do not appeal to us or for no reasons at all. The Act is not based on the wishes of the people of India and its provisions fall short of the minimum demands made by the Congress. But let us not belittle the good that the Act does us. We must recognise that it gives us some power and opens out new avenues of service for us which had hitherto been closed to Indians. I venture

to think that our clear duty in these circumstances is to make the most of what we have got and at the same time to continue to press for what is our due. As Mr. Ramsay MacDonald has said :

> Take advantage of whatever reforms are introduced into the Government of the country; lay down a fuller and a juster programme for the nation and let every one concerned know that you consider yourselves bound by none of the provisions to which you have taken exception, and go on using your influence to get what you want.

Mr. Montagu has laboured strenuously for us and we must express our appreciation of his work and his sincere desire to advance our national aspirations. He has expressed the apprehension that agitation would not hasten the transference of power but might delay it. Lord Middleton in the House of Lords has gone further and declared that " the continuance of agitation in order to obtain further concessions would be absolutely fatal to the future of India." We cannot share Mr. Montagu's apprehensions because of the faith in us, and as for Lord Middleton's warning we may ignore it in the assurance that the future of India does not rest in his Lordship's hands. In the course of the same debate Lord Meston was able from his own personal experience to assure the House of Lords that the " agitation in India was only evidence of something deeper. The spirit of nationalism bred in the soul and nurtured by our methods and our example lay below the whole political movement in India to-day. That spirit was spreading rapidly through all classes ". This spirit of nationalism cannot rest content unless all our demands are acceded to. Therefore I would beg of you to work the new reforms, utilise them for the betterment of the country and continue to press and agitate for our full demands.

THE DECLARATION OF RIGHTS

The Act, as I have said, gives us some power, but it does not give us free citizenship or the power to check the misuse by the executive of the functions of law and order. This demand was clearly formulated by the Special

Congress at Bombay and it was reiterated at Delhi last year. Subsequent events have but emphasised the necessity for it. No constitution can meet our needs unless it is accompanied with a guarantee and a clear declaration of our elementary rights which have recently been so ruthlessly violated in the Punjab. No Indian can be blind to the fact that the protection of our fundamental civic liberties is a matter of the most urgent consequence. No statesman can shut his eyes to the supreme moral necessity of securing the faith of the Indian people in the inviolability of their rights of citizenship.

Our demand for a Declaration of Rights was placed before the Parliamentary Joint Committee. It was ably pressed before them by our deputation, but the Committee did not give it even the courtesy of a brief notice in their report. We are thus left in the dark as to the reasons why this most natural demand has not been acceded to.

Without these rights, as some of the most distinguished publicists in England have stated recently in a manifesto: "British freedom is a mockery." It is obvious that all these traditional rights have been set at nought in India by the combined operation of the Indian D. O. R. A., the numerous repressive measures on our statute book and the cult of Martial Law.

History teaches us that wherever the liberties of a people have been placed at the mercy of an executive possessing the power to enact all the laws it wanted, the advent of self-government has been preceded or accompanied by a statutory declaration of rights. This is what we find in most of the continental constitutions of Europe and in the American constitution. Even in respect of India, the British Parliament has in the past expressed a desire to protect the fundamental liberties of the people. As early as 1833, when Parliament first set itself to reconstitute the Indian legislature, it specifically limited the powers of this body by a historic clause, the full meaning of which has often been ignored by the Indian Government and the Indian courts. The Indian legislature,

it declared, is to have no power "to make any law affecting the authority of Parliament or any part of the ancient laws of the constitution of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland whereon may depend in any degree the allegiance of any person to the Crown of the United Kingdom." But notwithstanding this the steady tendency of the executive in India has been to ignore the implications of this limitation of the Indian legislature. The Congress has rightly therefore been on its guard against this danger which lay in the proposals for reform. In considering these proposals and in suggesting modifications to them, it has insisted upon one essential condition, that whatever the scheme of reforms may be, it should include as an indispensable part thereof a Declaration of Indian Rights. Judging from Indian conditions alone, it is imperative for this Congress to state, that without a repeal of the existing repressive law and a guarantee of the future inviolability of our civic rights, no reforms in the constitutional machinery of the country can be regarded as satisfying our immediate requirements. They will not lessen the risks or the rigours of any future reign of terror, that might at any time be inaugurated in the country by a panic-stricken executive.

It has been said that a demand for the declaration of Indian rights is unsupported by constitutional precedent within the Empire and inconsistent with a demand for full Home Rule. But we are still very far from full Home Rule, even under the new dispensation, and the bureaucratic agents of Parliament in India would still be in practically uncontrolled exercise of the power to suspend and suppress civic liberties. But even if India gets full Home Rule within the Empire, it is difficult to see why a Declaration of Indian Rights should necessarily be considered inconsistent with the demand for full legislative powers for the Indian assemblies. It is true that in many British constitutions conferring full responsible government, the need of specific guarantees has not been felt owing to the protection afforded by the great principles flowing from the rule of Common Law

I have referred to above. But in cases where it was found that the tendency of the executive to encroach upon fundamental liberties was pronounced, the necessity of imposing limitations on the powers of even such responsible legislatures has been recognised and acted upon. I shall here only cite the latest example of this kind, which occurred when the late Liberal Government passed the Irish Home Rule Act. Section 4 of this Act provides, among other things:

> The powers of the Irish Legislature shall not extend to the making of any new law. . . . . whereby any person may be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law, or may be denied the equal protection of the laws, or whereby private property may be taken without just compensation.
>
> Any law made in contravention of this section shall be void.

It may be stated in this connection that the American Commonwealth has made a special feature of this Declaration of Rights, both in the Federal and in the State Constitutions. At the time when the Federal Constitution was originally framed, at the conclusion of the War of Independence, the proposal to embody a Declaration of Rights in the Constitution was discussed. This was given up owing to the delay involved in settling its terms in time for the Convention, but within a few years the necessity for doing so became apparent and the constitution was so amended as to include the Declaration of Rights. The terms of the declaration are far wider than those asked for by the Indian National Congress, which in fact has only adopted some of the important clauses of that section in the American Constitution.

The latest and the most instructive instance is that of the Philippines. The United States have not only conferred self-government on them at the earliest possible opportunity but have granted to them, under the constitution established by the Jones Law, a Declaration of Rights similar to their own.

GENERAL

Coming to the provisions of the New Act, we find that a considerable part of this measure is in the nature of a blank cheque. The filling up of this cheque is left to the Executive Government of India, subject to the supervision of the Secretary of State. This process may make or mar whatever benefits are intended to be conferred by the very large number of proposals which are subject to the extensive rule-making powers provided under the Act. There are yet further commissions or committees to come, and further investigations to be made in order to settle details. It is on the completion of this work that the Act will be fully put in operation.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF AUGUST 20TH

The Joint Committee of the Houses of Parliament have, no doubt, made improvements in some of the provisions of the original Bill. But, as they themselves declare, they have definitely accepted the substantial parts of the Bill and of the scheme of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report which it embodied, as conceived in the spirit and as interpreting with "scrupulous accuracy" the policy of His Majesty's Government, announced on the 20th August 1917. The Congress at Calcutta in 1917 pronounced the country's view on the policy of this announcement, the Special Congress in Bombay in August 1918 voiced our opinion on the Reform Report scheme, while the Delhi Congress in December last, at the conclusion of the great war, declared the demands of the country for freedom, justice and self-determination. But at every stage of evolution of this constitutional enactment, the right of the people of India or of the Congress to have the guiding voice in the settlement of their own self-governing institutions has not only been ignored, but has been definitely declared not to exist.

The Joint Committee of Parliament who, it was hoped, would improve the spirit of the Bill, took as narrow a view of the scope and policy of the Bill as the Government of India desired them to do in their latest representations.

They have no doubt endorsed cordially the policy of the eventual realisation of responsible self-government in India, but they have denied that India is at present fit for it and they have declared that the announcement did not give any promise of even "the grant of partial responsibility" at present. They have also repudiated our demand for the application of the principle of self-determination. The Bill seeks to provide, according to the Joint Committee, the solution for the problem enunciated in the declaration of His Majesty's Government of the 20th August 1917, which is described to be "to design the first stage in a measured progress towards responsible government." The nature and scope of this first stage, they say, have been misunderstood by the critics of the scheme. "Its critics forget," we are told, "that the announcement spoke of a substantial step in the direction of the gradual development of self-governing institutions, not of the partial introduction of responsible government; and it is this distinction which justifies the method by which the Bill imposes responsibility both on Ministers to the Legislative Council and on the members of the Legislative Council to their constituents, for the result of that part of the administration which is transferred to their charge." The hesitation and the reserve, the suspicion and caution that have thus characterised their report, seriously impair the value of their final proposals, which otherwise could have been improved and liberalised by them, without risk to the peace, safety or tranquillity of India. The extent to which this narrow spirit has pervaded their report is clearly indicated in its initial paragraphs. The Joint Committee, evidently under Lord Selborne's guidance, decided to expand the preamble to the Act, so as to bring all the qualifying clauses and restrictive conditions of the 20th August announcement within its compass in order to give "equal value" to all the parts thereof. This expansion, however, has had one good effect, evidently due, as paragraph 7 of the report indicates, but does not admit, to the strong presentation of the Congress case by our deputation before the Committee. The preamble has substituted Parliament

in place of the Indian and the British Government as the authority upon whom responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian people. The Joint Committee have acted on the assumption that the Bill is only intended to give the Indian people an opportunity, " a generous opportunity "—whatever that may mean—" of learning the actual business of Government." Their constant anxiety has been to preserve as the essential feature of the Bill, the guardianship of the peace and the responsibility for the duties of administration during this period in the hands of the Governor-General-in-Council. This has seriously affected the attempts, which they have in other ways made to remove defects in the original scheme of the Bill. I shall refer only to a few examples in this connection.

GRAND COMMITTEES AND LEGISLATION BY ORDINANCE

The plan proposed in the original Bill was to empower the Governor or Governor-General to certify what he deemed essential proposals of legislation or essential supplies and to get them enacted or passed through the machinery of an official *bloc*. This machinery was to consist of a Grand Committee in the provinces and of the Council of State in the Central Legislature. This plan was found so reactionary and objectionable that the Joint Committee rightly decided on finally abandoning it. This is a matter of some satisfaction to the Congress and its deputation who laid stress on the positively retrogressive character of this part of the scheme. Lord Meston had finally to acknowledge that the institution of Grand Committees would, in fact, reduce in certain respects some of the existing powers of the present Provincial Councils. It was indeed believed, until the Joint Committee's Report was actually published that the alternative machinery which would be set up for the purpose of securing emergency or essential legislation or supplies would be a somewhat extended variation of what the Congress actually proposed at the Special Session in Bombay in 1918, *viz.*, that of making temporary Ordinances. The Moderate deputation had, however, expressed their willingness to

support the original Grand Committee and the Council of State scheme. The London *Times* which made a forecast of the report before it was issued stated the position in the following terms:—

> The alternative in contemplation is to give a wider range to the power residing in the Governor-General, in cases of emergency, to make ordinances which have the force of law for a period of not more than six months. During this time, if permanence were deemed necessary, the Bill would again come before the Provincial Legislature, and in the event of a second rejection the question would be referred to the Secretary of State, who would take the advice thereon of the Parliamentary Select Committee. This would mean much coming to London of Indian deputations to give evidence or influence opinion, and would operate in a sense against the principle, at the root of self-government, that Indian affairs should be decided as far as possible in India. But the politicians tell us that that principle cannot be too dogmatically applied so long as the Executive can on occasion disregard the Legislature. It is desirable to see the detail of the plan before definite opinions are formed as to its merits compared with the Grand Committee method. But this, at least, may be said: wherever in the British Dominions the Executive is in a permanent minority in the Legislature, essential laws are secured through ordinance-making powers, and the final decision as to their permanence rests with His Majesty's Government in London, usually through the agency of the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

In spite of such considerations, the Joint Committee finally decided to give power to the head of the Indian executive to enact permanent laws, without even a definite prior sanction by the Secretary of State and subject only to his subsequent ratification or disallowance. The final proposals in this behalf that have now received Parliamentary assent are bound to cause disappointment over the whole country.

Fellow-Delegates, much as I appreciate the abandonment of the Grand Committee and of the original plan for the constitution of the Council of State, much as I value the passing away of the fictitious and unreal procedure therein involved, I cannot reconcile myself to the idea that a single individual, be he the wisest and most responsible man on earth, should be invested, even in an emergency, with the power to enact laws affecting a fifth of the human race. We have had only too bitter an experience of the

truth, which Lord Morley has crystallized in one of his aphorisms, that "Public Safety, Social Order and similar phrases easily become but fair names for a Reign of Terror." I do not ignore the fact that assurances were given by Mr. Montagu in the House of Commons and recommendations have been made by the Joint Committee, that the exercise of this power by the Governor or Governor-General would be subject to the scrutiny both of the Secretary of State and of a Standing Committee of the House of Commons. I am aware that Mr. Montagu has stated, that all important cases would be brought up before the House by the Indian Secretary and would be made, whenever he deemed it needful, matter of debate or resolution by the House. But we know what all such invitations for the voluntary interest of Parliament amount to. There is no statutory guarantee that only the Parliament or the House of Commons—not the minister of the Crown, who is usually and necessarily the mouthpiece of the Governor-General—shall, during the transition period, sanction laws which the Indian Legislature may have wrongly refused to enact. Unless this is provided, the risk of the abuse of what are called reserved powers will remain very real. It has also been argued that the very magnitude of the powers thus lodged in the hands of the Governors and Governor-General would operate as a check against their frequent exercise, and it is also contended that the tension that may be produced by its abuse may develop situations which would result in its disuse or abolition. If the power thus given is not to be exercised or if its exercise will lead to its abolition, there is no necessity whatever to provide for it. However this may be, so far as our present situation goes, our experience of the Government of India's responsibility or responsiveness to public opinion is most disheartening. Verbal assurances by well-meaning politicians have not availed against the wilful misapplication of existing powers, nor have understandings and conventions availed us against the determination of obstinate bureaucrats to over-ride them. Weapons of repression, which had been in disuse and had rusted for a century, have been taken out of their ancient

armoury and employed with a rigour of which the Punjab has borne the brunt. Coercive powers intended for war purposes have been deliberately perverted for suppressing normal and legitimate political activity or agitation. We have known how even resolutions of the House of Commons have been treated as inconsequential *ipse dixits* of a far-off assembly. It is indeed surprising that with his intimate knowledge of the past record of the Indian Government, Mr. Montagu should have seriously contended that the statutory protection of Parliament on this most important matter should be left to understandings, especially when some other matters of less consequence have been made to depend for their validity or their continuance on a vote of either House of Parliament under this very Act. It was possible in 1913 for a reactionary House of Lords to protect the interests of the bureaucracy and veto the over-due reform of providing the United Provinces with an Executive Council. Even a most liberal House of Commons may find it very difficult, except with the consent of the Indian Secretary, to veto as of right under the present statute an obnoxious repressive measure which the Indian executive may have carried over the heads of the representative legislative authority in the land.

POWERS OF GOVERNORS AND THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL

The sum total of the reserved powers in the hands of the Government or Governor-General in respect of legislation is indeed enormous. In the first place, he has the usual power of vetoing a law passed by the legislature. He has also another power given to him under the new Reform Act to stop the progress of a Bill in the Legislature and even prevent discussion of the whole or any part of a Bill, if he thinks that it affects the safety or tranquillity of any part of a province. And then, in addition to all this, he has the power to enact affirmatively, overriding the opposition of the Legislature, any law on the same ground subject to the subsequent sanction of the Secretary of State. We are deeply grateful to Colonel Wedgwood and Mr. Ben Spoor and other British friends,

who put forward the Congress case before the House of Commons, in this and in other respects. The amendment proposed by Colonel Wedgwood, to permit at least a free discussion of Bills and motions in all cases by the legislature concerned, was opposed by Mr. Montagu and rejected by the House. In the result, we have only to trust to the extra good sense and statesmanship of the new race of governors we are promised, and to the increased interest in Indian affairs which the House of Commons is expected to evince in future.

THE BUDGET

If the powers of the Governors and the Governor-General in legislation are so wide and unrestricted, their powers in regard to the Budget appear to me on close examination nearly as wide and far-reaching. The decision of the Joint Committee to reject the scheme of separate purses in the provinces is no doubt a just and correct one, based on the practical unworkability and unsoundness of the proposals made, but I cannot say that the alternative procedure they have now settled with the approval of Parliament is in any way consistent with the existence of a really effective budget right in the Legislative Council. The operative part of the new scheme is as follows:—

> They advise that, if the Governor in the course of preparing either his first or any subsequent budget finds that there is likely to be a serious or protracted difference of opinion between the executive council and his ministers on this subject, he should be empowered at once to make an allocation of revenue and balance between the reserved and transferred subjects, which would continue for at least the whole life of the existing legislative council.

It will be remembered that it is the power not to "direct" but to influence and eventually to control the policy of reserved subjects, though the Budget, that was all along demanded by us and was believed to have been conceded by the Reform Scheme. In this matter there existed no difference of opinion whatever between the several sections of progressive Indians. In the Bombay Moderates' memorandum this was the position expected to result from the Budget proposals in the original Reform

Scheme. The Government of India were alarmed at this possibility and in consequence propounded their separate purses scheme, which has now been abandoned. It was at this time that Sir Sankaran Nair wrote his masterly dissenting minutes, for which, and for the courageous attitude he took up on the Punjab question, the country will ever remain grateful. In the course of one of those minutes he accurately described the popular attitude towards the Budget proposals in the following words:—

> Notwithstanding much that could be said against the Reforms Report Scheme, a number of critics rallied to its support for the reasons, among others, that it provided for a unified budget and for its being voted by the Legislature. . . . , . . . The control by the Legislature must in any event be regarded as indispensable if the Reforms are to be worth anything in the eye of even the supporters of the scheme.

It is exactly this right and power in respect of reserved subjects that the Joint Committee have definitely negatived. They say:—

> The budget should not be capable of being used as a means for enabling ministers or a majority of the Legislative Council to direct the policy of reserved subjects; but on the other hand the Executive Council should be helpful to ministers in their desire to develop the departments entrusted to their care.

Thus, not only can the Governor settle the Budget of a province for three years if he anticipates trouble, not only can he prevent the minister or the legislature from making any attempt to direct the policy of reserved subjects, even if they involve extra expenditure or taxation, but in regard to all financial matters the authority of the Governor or Governor-General has been made by the Committee as complete and unfettered as it might be. Their report says: "The Committee desire it to be made perfectly clear that this power is real and that its exercise should not be regarded as unusual or arbitrary."

SOME IMPROVEMENTS

It must in fairness be admitted that the scheme has been improved in several directions by the Joint Committee. Of these improvements the addition of two more Indian

members to the Viceroy's Executive Council is an appreciable one.

I would also draw special attention to the recommendations which relate to the revision of the existing Land Revenue assessments and policy in India. The declaration of policy by the Joint Committee on this sore and vexed question in the following words, will, I sincerely hope, soon lead to some appreciable alleviation of the arbitrary and so often unbearable burdens which the present system imposes on the poverty-stricken Indian ryot :

> The Committee are impressed by the objections raised by many witnesses to the manner in which certain classes of taxation can be laid upon the people of India by executive action without, in some cases, any statutory limitation of rates and, in other cases, any adequate prescription by statute of the methods of assessment. They consider that the imposition of new burdens should be gradually brought more within the purview of the legislature.

DIVISION OF FUNCTIONS

I do not propose to weary you by going through the lists of reserved and transferred subjects as finally settled by the Joint Committee, which we may presume will be incorporated in the regulations soon to be laid before Parliament under the new Act. I am convinced that the Congress was fully justified in pressing on Parliament the demand of the country for immediate full provincial autonomy, and that it would have failed in its duty if it had refrained from so doing. But as dyarchy has come to stay in our Provincial Governments, until we are able to supersede it by full provincial autonomy, I may just as well refer to two subjects, in which the so-called transference of increased power has been hailed in some quarters as a great concession in itself. Thanks to the report of the Featham Committee and the dissenting minute of Sir Sankaran Nair, the Government of India's retrogressive proposals about Education and Industry have been vetoed. But in spite of this the amount of popular initiative or control in either of these departments is not in the result so very great as might be supposed. Education, for instance, is a transferred subject, but it is subject to the conditions that

all new universities, the old universities of Benares and Calcutta, Chiefs' Colleges, and European Schools, secondary education in Bengal, and the Central Scientific and Industrial Research Institutes are not to be transferred. All this constitutes a diminution in the area of control of a subject admitted to be eminently fit for transference to ministerial responsibility and popular control. Again, that part of educational administration, which would involve the obvious duties of compulsion and taxation, *viz.*, free primary education, is severely left to the Minister to manage without the slightest prospect of his hoping for financial relief from the reserved departments or their ample revenues.

Similarly though agriculture is a transferred subject, the benefit derivable from the transfer is substantially lessened by the fact that irrigation, water storage as well as Land Revenue will be reserved. Again, the development of Industries is to be a transferred subject, but factories and mines, railways, shipping and navigation including waterways, ports and customs, currency and coinage are to be reserved subjects. It must tax the brains of all ordinary men to find what discernable development of industries can exist without factories and the facilities provided by the departments not transferred.

FISCAL AUTONOMY

A connected subject with that of industries, on which some of us are prone to over-rate the concession made, is what is claimed to be the partial grant of fiscal autonomy. Fiscal autonomy in its strict sense has reference to the tariff and customs arrangements by which the Government regulates the commerce of the country and also raises revenue out of the country's trade. It is in respect of this that we have long claimed our right to levy duties or impose restrictions in the interests of India's well-being and to be free from the dictation of the Imperial Government so often made in the interests of British capital and commerce. Whether anything approaching this right is likely to be secured by the recommendations

of the Joint Committee has to be judged by the following passage of their report:—

> Nothing is more likely to endanger the good relations between India and Great Britain than a belief that India's fiscal policy is dictated from Whitehall in the interests of the trade of Great Britain. That such a belief exists at the moment there can be no doubt. That there ought to be no room for it in the future is equally clear. . . . In the opinion of the Committee, therefore, the Secretary of State should as far as possible avoid interference on this subject when the Government of India and its Legislature are in agreement, and they think that his intervention when it does take place, should be limited to safeguarding the international obligations of the Empire or any fiscal arrangements within the Empire to which His Majesty's Government is a party.

Anxious as I am to commend the just and generous spirit in which the Joint Committee have tried to solve this question, I am unable to regard their recommendation as anything more than a pious hope. It is clear that unless and until we get responsible government real fiscal autonomy cannot exist.

PERIODICAL PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY

The Congress demand for the realisation of responsible government within a definite time-limit was not acceded to, when the Montagu-Chelmsford scheme was framed, and in its place there was provided a series of enquiries at the end of 5 and 10 years respectively for the further transference of provincial subjects to popular control. Some of our countrymen welcomed these enquiries, because they looked like the old periodical Parliamentary enquiries into Indian affairs, which the Congress had asked to be revived in its earlier years. They also hoped successfully to survive the test and investigation that would be made and, like Oliver Twist, to go forward again and ask for more. The injustice of submitting a nation's birthright to the jurisdiction and decisions of an outside body or committee was on the other hand deeply resented by many others, who felt that any such submission to jurisdiction and consequent acceptance of verdict would be essentially wrong and unworthy of the self-respect of Indians. India's national self-realisation became so evident

and overwhelming during the anti-Rowlatt Bill agitation that the Government of India was greatly alarmed and instructed Lord Meston to ask for the withdrawal of the promise of the 5 year revisions. Lord Meston fixed the period for the next revision at the minimum of ten years, and it is a matter for disappointment that the Joint Committee have accepted this view. They have omitted the clause in the Bill relating to the 5 year revision and have provided only for an enquiry after ten years. I do not attach much importance to these periodical examinations, so wounding to our self-respect and so susceptible of being used by the bureaucracy for its own purposes. But the fixing of the ten years' limit is significant as showing the temper of those who finally shaped the scheme.

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Perhaps the most serious omission in the Act, as finally passed by both houses, is that it fails to provide for any transferrence of administrative or political powers to the representatives of the people in the Central Government. Except for the addition of two Indian members to the Viceroy's Executive Council and an expansion of the Central Legislature into chambers with a preponderance of elected members, the powers and functions of the Governor-General-in-Council in all matters are maintained as effectively as they have been till now. Even on the narrow principles laid down by the Joint Committee, there existed no ground to withhold the grant of some powers to the Central Legislature in respect of the Budget and in some spheres of administration. It is remarkable and significant too that their report has neither endorsed nor rejected any of the untenable grounds on which the Government of India repeatedly urged that the Central Government should be left entirely untouched. Nor have they dealt with the repeated demand pressed before them by nearly all the Indian deputations that the element of responsibility, the keystone of the new fabric, should be introduced in the Central Government also if the scheme is to have a fair trial.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE

A feature of the Act which has disappointed me much is the failure to do justice to the political rights of Indian women. I had hoped that Parliament would profit by the lesson of the woman suffrage agitation in England, but they have repeated the mistake of the Franchise Committee. The justice of the claim was recognised and the flimsiest of arguments were advanced in favour of delay. I trust that Indian men will come to the rescue of their sisters and hasten the day of their enfranchisement.

THE ENFRANCHISEMENT OF LABOUR AND THE MASSES

Another unsatisfactory feature of the Act is the attitude shown towards the enfranchisement of the masses and the wage-earning classes. The Joint Committee have limited the total number of people enfranchised to about 1·5 per cent. of the population. Mr. Montagu welcomed trade unionism in India but added that industrial labour had as yet attained a very small development. He did not choose to tell us how India's industrial development has been obstructed by the British Indian Government. Nor did he refer to the 80 per cent. of our people who depend on agriculture. To the *kisan* delegates present here I am glad to see in their hundreds, who represent the great agricultural proletariat of this country, and to the labour delegates, this Congress owes a special duty. We have to see to their enfranchisement and to the improvement of their hard conditions of life.

These, Fellow-Delegates, are the reforms which have been granted to us. There is little reason for us to be enthusiastic over them but we must take them for what they are worth. We shall not lag behind others in extracting all the good there is in them, but we are not prepared to surrender our demand in consideration for the enforced schooling and periodical examinations provided for us. We cannot and we will not rest content till we gain the full measure of that demand.

COMMISSIONS IN THE ARMY AND NAVY

But what would reforms, however substantial, avail us if they are confined to the civil administration of the country. The most perfect machinery of self-government cannot endure for a day if it does not rest on the solid foundation of self-defence. The most generous Parliamentary grant of full responsible government cannot subsist without the corresponding grant to us of the power to defend ourselves, of the right to bear arms in defence of our motherland, of the right to possess our own army and navy, manned, officered and controlled by our own countrymen. Theories of a world peace, of a League of Nations and the rights of small nationalities are all attractive in their way, though they seem now to recede further away than ever from practical realisation. But they cannot justify the continued emasculation of an ancient nation which her political subjection has brought upon her. Notwithstanding the activity displayed in the starting of political reforms, the delay and reluctance shown in the recognition and the grant of India's right to enlist her youth and manhood in the service of her army and navy, in the highest as in the lowest ranks, is indeed deplorable. We are all thankful in this connection to our distinguished fellow-countrymen, Sir Abbas Ali Baig and Sir K. G. Gupta, who have pointedly noticed this serious deficiency in the scheme for the speedy grant of self-government to India. It is also gratifying to note that Mr. Montagu has shown a readier tendency to recognise the importance of urgent reform in this respect than he was disposed to show either in the Reform Report, or in the most disappointing steps that he has taken in regard to military and naval commissions for Indians. "We must not deny to India," he said in his concluding speech on the Bill in Parliament, "self-government because she cannot take her proper share in her own defence and then deny Indians the opportunity of learning to defend themselves. These are problems of which Parliament assumes responsibility by the passage of this Bill." Will Parliament then take immediate steps to fulfil this responsibility ?

THE KHILAFAT QUESTION

I now turn to a question of supreme importance to our Mohammadan brothers and for that reason of equal importance to all Indians. I mean the Khilafat question. It is impossible for one part of the nation to stand aloof while the other part is suffering from a serious grievance. This was clearly shown when the vast majority of non-Muslims made common cause with the Muslims and abstained from participating in the recent peace celebrations in India. No words of mine are necessary to emphasize the obvious duty of this Congress to give the question its best consideration.

The entry of Turkey in the war was a most momentous event from the Indian Muslims' point of view. They felt no inconsiderable misgivings about their attitude when they saw that an issue had arisen, which seemed to involve a conflict between their loyalty to their King and country and duty to the religious head of the Islamic world. But these doubts were happily shortlived and the Indian Mohammadans cheerfully cast in their lot with the British Empire when the memorable announcement of the 2nd November, 1914, was made by Lord Hardinge, securing to the Mohammadans complete immunity from any interference with their religious feelings. This announcement was followed by similar assurances from other British statesmen. Mr. Lloyd George in his famous speech of the 5th January 1918, said: "Nor are we fighting to deprive Turkey of its capital or of the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor and Thrace which are predominantly Turkish in race."

The war has ended in complete victory for the allied arms. Moslem India, nay United India, demands that full effect be given to these assurances.

Apart from the promises and pledges given to His Majesty's Muslim subjects they have the right to demand the application of the principle of self-determination to the component parts of the Turkish Empire in the same way as it has been applied to Poland and the Yugo-Slavs. What

reason is there for a different treatment of Mesopotamia and Syria, where the population is almost entirely Muslim in faith, or of Palestine and Armenia, where Muslims are more numerous than the followers of any other religion ?

As to who is the rightful *Khalifat-ul-Islam,* it is unnecessary for me to enter into historical or religious considerations. Lord Robert Cecil has admitted in the House of Commons that "His Majesty's Government have never departed from the attitude that the question of Khilafat is one for Muslim opinion alone to decide". Muslim opinion has now decided it, in a manner which leaves no possible doubt, in favour of the Sultan of Turkey. With Arabia independent, with foreign powers governing Mesopotamia, Syria and Armenia in the guise of mandatories, with Palestine restored to the Jews, with the Greeks securely lodged in Smyrna and the Hinterland, with Constantinople itself internationalized, what, I ask, is the position of the *Khalifat-ul-Islam* ? Fellow-Delegates, it is a serious question demanding your most earnest attention.

INDIANS OVERSEAS

It has been our unfortunate duty from year to year of late to discuss the questions affecting the status of our countrymen who, trusting to the protection that British citizenship should ensure to them, have gone to the different parts of the British Dominions in pursuit of trade or employment.

Among these South Africa has claimed the largest part of public attention. There, our countrymen have exhibited in the face of heavy odds, qualities of orderly and constitutional resistance, endurance and pluck which make us feel proud as a nation. We had hoped that after the struggle they carried on for eight years involving great sacrifice and entailing imprisonment of thousands of innocent men, there would be honourable peace for them. But it was not to be. Their European rivals in trade have set up a vehement and virulent agitation against them which may end in disaster to them if we do not do our duty. Fortunately both the Government of India and the

Secretary of State are on the alert. And we may hope that at the very least the new Act just passed by the South African Legislature will be repealed or so amended as not to diminish the rights existing at the time of the Smuts-Gandhi settlement. All India will anxiously await the result of Sir Benjamin Robertson's mission to South Africa. We may derive further consolation from the fact that our good friend Mr. C. F. Andrews is on his way to South Africa to assist our countrymen there. The Imperial Citizenship Association deserves our congratulations for arranging Mr. Andrews' visit. As you are aware Mr. Andrews was requested on his way to visit East Africa. His cable to Mr. Gandhi from East Africa is alarming and shows that the greed and the prejudice of the European trader and speculator will make him compass the ruin of the Indian settlers in East Africa even by employing dishonest means. The history of East Africa is a history of peaceful development by our countrymen without the gun and the brandy bottle. The Indian trader who has gone to East Africa has been on the friendliest terms with the Africans, and has raised their culture without making any boast of civilizing them. It is a libel to say that our traders have brought about moral depravity. Let us hope that the Government of India will tell the anti-Indian agitators in unmistakable language that the rights of the Indians in East Africa are not to be interfered with in any way whatsoever. In your name I assure our countrymen of our warm sympathy and support in their struggle to defeat this utterly unscrupulous and interested agitation.

Then there remains the question of indentured labour. We may congratulate the Government of India and ourselves that on this question there is no division of opinion. The system of indentured labour is gone for ever. I trust that Lord Chelmsford's assurance that the Fiji indentures will be cancelled in the beginning of the new year will be fulfilled and that an announcement to that effect will be made before the year is out. It would be wrong of me not to mention Sir George Barnes' name in

this connection. These questions come under his department. And thanks to Mr. Andrews' exposure and Sir George Barnes' sympathetic attitude we shall soon see our countrymen in Fiji freed from the curse. The natural corollary to this must be the termination of Indian indentures in the other parts of the dominions also.

SWADESHI

From matters which require political action I come to that which in its one aspect requires no political or legal action, yet which is one that is fraught with the greatest consequences for good. I refer to Swadeshi. Mr. Gandhi has made this question his own. He would, if he could, revive the ancient industry of hand-spinning and make the country self-supporting. Modern economists may doubt the success of the scheme in this age of machinery. But Mr. Gandhi's scheme is one in which there is no waste and if it becomes popular it bids fair to solve the problem of finding a subsidiary occupation to agriculture. Seventy-three per cent. of our population is agricultural. No agricultural population can exist without a supplementary industry. If our women were to take to hand-spinning and if hand-weaving became fashionable as before, without a big organization and without a large outlay of money, we can not only produce sufficient cloth for our wants but provide the peasantry with an auxiliary industry. I commend the scheme to the attention of the delegates.

OTHER SUBJECTS

I have trespassed enough on your indulgence. Yet I have not touched many important problems which vitally affect the future of our country. I have not considered the question of education with which is bound up all hope of future progress, nor have I dealt with industries or the terrible poverty of the people. The Universities and the Industries Commissions have done good work in their respective spheres, but true reform can only be effected when the full control of these departments is put in the hands of the representatives of the people, who alone can

understand and supply the needs of the country. Resolutions on these subjects will, I doubt not, be laid before you for your acceptance. They will be moved by eminent speakers, far more competent to deal with their special subjects than I can presume to be.

MR. B. G. HORNIMAN

But, by your leave, I shall say a few words about a friend of India who has suffered because of the love he bore our country. This Congress needs no words of mine to inform it of the many and varied services, which Mr. B. G. Horniman has rendered to our cause. We are a grateful nation and our friends are not so many that we can afford to forget or lose any of them. Mr. Horniman, as you are aware, was removed from a bed of sickness and without any respite made to leave the country. That is the way of the bureaucracy. Charges of a gross nature have been made against him in the House of Commons and elsewhere. They have been contradicted and proved to be false, but there has been no withdrawal of them, nor has Mr. Horniman been permitted to return. In England he is devoting himself to our cause, but that is poor consolation for us, who miss his wise counsel and his sturdy independence.

CONCLUSION

Fellow-Delegates, I have had my say. It is for you now to deliberate on the many problems which await solution. Yours is a tremendous responsibility. India is entering upon a new phase of her existence and her future is in your keeping. It is for you to decide what is the best and the quickest way for us to reach our goal.

But what is our ultimate goal? We want freedom of thought, freedom of action, freedom to fashion our own destiny and build up an India—suited to the genius of her people. We do not wish to make of India a cheap and slavish imitation of the West. We have so far sought to liberalise our government on the western model. Whether that will satisfy us in the future I cannot say. But let us bear in mind that western democracy has not proved

a panacea for all ills; it has not yet solved the problems which surround us. Europe is torn asunder by the conflict between labour and capital, and the proletariat is raising its head against the rule of the classes. It may be that when we get the power to mould our institutions, we shall evolve a system of government, which will blend all that is best in the east and the west. Meanwhile, let us beware of the errors of the west and at the same time cast out the evil customs and traditions which have clung to us. We must aim at an India where all are free and have the fullest opportunities of development; where women have ceased to be in bondage, and the rigours of the caste system have disappeared; where there are no privileged classes or communities; where education is free and open to all; where the capitalist and the landlord do not oppress the labourer and the ryot; where labour is respected and well paid, and poverty, the nightmare of the present generation, is a thing of the past. Life will then be worth living in this country, it will be inspired by joy and hope, and the terrible misery we see around us will become a bad dream which has faded away from our memory, on our awakening to welcome the morning sun.

But that day is yet distant. We have still a difficult path, full of obstacles and pitfalls, before us. Let us march ahead with truth for our guide and courage our watchword and before long we shall reach the promised land.

VANDE MATARAM.

MR. C. VIJIARAGHAVACHARIAR

FELLOW-DELEGATES, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I rise to discharge my duty in obedience to my country's call. And the first part of my duty to-day is to return my warm and sincere thanks to you for the honour you have done me in reposing this great trust in me. It would be mere affectation on my part if I appear to be indifferent to the very genuine pleasure you have enabled me to derive from your confidence. I am one of the oldest Congressmen and it would be unnatural if I do not feel in the highest degree grateful for the best of all rewards, the affection and confidence of my countrymen. But believe me, when in the simplicity of my heart, I say that my pleasure would have been far greater and less mingled with any uneasy feelings if such an honour had been bestowed on me some years ago or reserved for me to be earned in the future. For, anxious, most religiously anxious as I am to perform my allotted task earnestly and with courage, I feel considerably embarrassed owing to the fact that the political situation in which we find ourselves placed now is grave and complicated beyond our expectation and conception. My inspiring consolation lies in the hope that you will extend to me throughout this session a liberal measure of your kindness and indulgence to sustain me in my consciousness of my shortcomings and infirmities disabling me from rising equal to the responsibilities of this great and unique occasion. And on this occasion and in this presence it is impossible for me to resist the very natural temptation to say how deeply I lament the fact that if that great son of India whose manhood was a life of selfless suffering in our country's cause in a spirit of dedication rarely surpassed in

the annals of national struggles for freedom, Lokamanya Tilak, had been spared, the confidence you have reposed in me to-day had been of very superior right, his, and would have been, happily, not mine.

The business before us is as trying as it is great in every interest. We have to conceive and adopt a message to be sent to our gracious Sovereign and to the great peoples of the world. And that message is that the people of India are now placed by their rulers in an intolerable position and that they are determined forthwith to make their beautiful country "fit and safe" for her sons and daughters to live in, and that any further delay in their achievement of this vital object means ruin to them and peril to the Empire if not to the future peace of the world.

The problem for us now is how best to accomplish this great task. At the outset let us know what we are exactly in order that we might clearly know what we are about. We are, of our own free will and consent, a constituent people of the great British Commonwealth by virtue of an original compact and this national institution of ours was for years in the womb of time and was started into life thirty-five years ago in order to persuade and compel the other party to the compact to loyally perform their duties and obligations under it in view to the political regeneration of our country and to reach our destined status of an equal partner in the possession and enjoyment of the blessings of the English constitution with the rest of the nations composing the British Commonwealth. We are satisfied, mournfully satisfied, that the time has arrived, if it had not risen years ago, for the immediate establishment of responsible government for British India with an instrument in writing containing a declaration of the fundamental rights of the people and a constitution similar to the constitution of the United Kingdom and the Self-Governing Dominions. We are here to ask the other party to the original compact that they may not further postpone the performance of their part of the agreement in integrity, in letter and spirit and to let us arm ourselves with law and machinery to prevent them and their agents

henceforth from committing breaches thereof, at least not with impunity, as hitherto.

I have prepared and annexed to this address a draft statute of the nature of the instrument just described. I do not think I need detain you by reading it through. I think I might better employ the time at my disposal by inviting your attention to the leading principles and provisions of the scheme which I have ventured to submit for your consideration and approval with such modifications, as you might deem fit to adopt in the light of our discussion and deliberation in this session. I might say here that there is hardly any principle or provision in it which is original. They have all been taken from great political works and from the constitutional instruments of some of the most advanced countries, pre-eminently France. I might also add that this scheme was, in the main, placed before the Right. Hon'ble The Secretary of State and His Excellency The Viceroy in my interview with them three years ago, when they were touring in the country in connection with the then coming Reforms.

The most important part in the proposed scheme relates to a declaration of our fundamental rights as men and as British citizens. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of a written constitution. Almost all modern countries possessed of a constitutional government have written-constitutions. England seems to be the only exception but only a partial exception, for her constitution is made up as well of charters and statutes as of traditions and usages preserved as common law by the line of great judges who contributed to the national freedom of England no less than her great statesmen and soldiers. I venture to submit that it is too late to think of an unwritten constitution. An unwritten constitution can only grow and cannot be made in a day. The English constitution may be said to begin with the Magna Charta seven centuries ago, and it may be said to have been most perfected after the Reform Act of 1832. Obviously it is unreasonable to expect India to begin the growth of its

constitution now and wait for centuries for its full development. Apart from this consideration all authorities are quite the other way as to the superior advantages of a written constitution. Professor Temperley emphasises the danger of an unwritten constitution. Says he as follows :—

> In two respects an unwritten constitution in a country constitutes a most serious danger ; in the first place custom may be susceptible of two meanings while law is only susceptible of one, and the interpretation of constitutional custom offers great opportunities to reckless or unscrupulous statesmen. This danger is real enough, but there is another that is greater still; the procedure of the English Parliament is the same in the case of ordinary laws and of laws which are amendments to the constitution. In all countries where a written constitution exists the procedure for amending is special, elaborate and cumbrous ; in England there is no difference between the procedure which sanctions a law for taxing dogs and that which sanctions a law for abolishing Peers.

The greatest political thinker of England, Edmund Burke, is in raptures on the great merits of a written constitution. Says he :—

> The rights of *men*, that is to say, the natural rights of mankind, are indeed sacred things: and if any public measure is proved mischievously to affect them, the objection ought to be fatal to that measure, even if no charter at all could be set up against it. If these natural rights are further affirmed and declared by express covenants, if they are clearly defined and secured against chicane, against power, and authority, by written instruments and positive engagements, they are in a still better condition; they partake not only the sanctity of the object so secured, but of that solemn public faith itself, which secures an object of such importance. Indeed this formal recognition, by sovereign power, of an original right in the subject, can never be subverted, but by rooting up the holding, radical principles of government, and even of society itself. The charters, which we call by distinction *great*, are public instruments of this nature ; I mean the charters of King John and King Henry the third. The things secured by these instruments may, without any deceitful ambiguity, be very fitly called the *chartered rights of men.*

Besides, a written declaration of rights is a great instrument of national education. We all know that the laws of the Twelve Tables in ancient Rome were taught to the children and they had to know them by heart as if they were the Vedas or the Koran. This practice in no smal

degree contributed to the vitality of the great republic. An early and accurate knowledge of one's fundamental rights is also a measure of one's conception of similar rights of one's fellow-citizens, and consequently of the mutual duties of the citizens of a State.

Such a study is a great contributory factor in the creation of those habits of mind which enable individuals to enjoy their full freedom in peace and harmony with their fellow-citizens.

I desire distinctly to assert and maintain that it is no exaggeration to say that the declaration of the fundamental rights of humanity should be studied and regarded by the youth of a nation as if it were a gospel. The political gospel reached by the efforts of man and not revealed is the hand-maid of the revealed religious gospel, and the bedrock of its principles is human experience of its utility and human wisdom and not faith unaided by reason. Although all civilized countries, ancient and modern, developed great political concepts and built up systems of political philosophy, the glory of discovering and rescuing the primary rights of man from the obscure depths of history and philosophy belongs to France. It was her philosophers who not only so discovered and rescued them but also enunciated them with exactitude and draped them in the freshest and most attractive garb of phraseology. It was the most precious French blood that was shed to enthrone and consecrate them at the altar not only of patriotism but also of humanity. While English patriots claimed and established their political rights in terms of ancient English pedigree and heritage, France thought, spoke, fought and bled for humanity in terms of humanity. The one cardinal divine principle underlying all these rights is that man is not the proprietor but trustee of his life. He is therefore not the proprietor but the trustee, accountable to society and to God, of the essential constituents that make up human life. We can easily understand, therefore, the principle and doctrine that our rights of personal freedom, liberty of thought and speech, and the other vital rights

without which the fullest, freest and healthiest life is impossible are inalienable and imprescriptible. We cannot part with them or surrender them, except by way of noble self-sacrifice in the service of humanity; nor may they be invaded upon and appropriated on the ground of prescription, that is to say on the ground that we once and long ago lost them. Hence, this is the source of all human laws and all machinery to enact and execute those laws must be in its nature and functions framed in consonance with the spirit and letter of these fundamental rights. M. Poincare, the late distinguished President of the French Republic, most aptly calls the Declaration of Rights the "Law of all Laws". And he further adds that every society in which the guarantee of fundamental rights is not assured may be said to have no constitution at all.

Nextly, the scheme contains provisions as to the nature and functions of the machinery of Government of what Professor Dicey happily calls the legal agency of the political sovereignty of the people. This is a scheme of responsible government in the outline. I venture to think that few would dispute the fact that responsible government is the best form of government as yet developed for a free country. The expression responsible government involves the idea of a double responsibility, *i.e.*, the responsibility of the executive government to the legislature being representatives of the sovereign people, and the responsibility of the entire personnel of the executive government for the acts of every one of them as if they constituted but a single person. The one other form of government that may be claimed to be equal to the form of responsible government in efficiency and guarantee of people's freedom is the government with a referendum like that of Switzerland, that is to say all measures of government are submitted compulsorily or on demand to the judgment of the people of the country assembled for the purpose. This form is obviously impossible for all large countries. The next best form of government is a federal democracy like that of the United States of America.

There the responsibility of the executive is directly to the people and not to the representative legislature of the people and there is no such thing as collective cabinet responsibility of the officials that compose the executive. They do not stand or fall together like the English Cabinet and each one of them can only be got rid of by the people by the clumsy and ancient method of impeachment for high crimes and misdemeanours or only at the next election. Whereas, in a country of parliamentary and cabinet government, the executive government can be dismissed and replaced when they lose the confidence of the majority of the members of the representative legislature, owing to conduct on their part or on the part of any of them which that majority does not approve and it is not necessary that such conduct should amount to a crime or misdemeanour, capable of being made into a charge for trial by impeachment, such an executive government can be and is carried on without commanding the confidence of the legislature, unicameral or bicameral.

I venture to think that it is in our lasting interests that we designate the form of government we seek simply responsible government like that of the United Kingdom and of the Self-governing Dominions. I would not describe it by the Sanskrit word "Swarajya". Although this word means simply self-government or home rule, it is on the one hand capable of being misunderstood abroad, especially by England in its present mentality coloured by the vicissitudes due to the struggle of Ireland and on the other hand it is devoid of historic conventions and usages which make for the healthy growth and development of responsible government. Besides, responsible government as such has been accepted as the policy of His Majesty in Parliament.

The only other part of the proposed Draft Constitution to which I would call your attention relates to the power of altering the constitution from time to time, to be held and exercised by the Indian Legislature. That is to say this legislature is not only to be a law-making body and to have control of the executive but also to be what is known as a constituent body. This provision embodies the principle

of national sovereignty and the power to alter the constitution is delegated to the legislature by the sovereign people. Without this power it would be a mere delusion to say that the people of this country have the rights of self-determination and political sovereignty. This constituent power is, according to the same great French authority, "the beginning and the end and the very essence of sovereignty."

You will observe that this power on the part of the legislature is to be exercised not in the ordinary way in which ordinary laws are made but by a special procedure. This is in accordance with the principles adopted by all the free countries with a written constitution. The special procedure is that any proposed amendment to the constitution should be passed by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the members of either chamber of the legislature and that the measure should be submitted to the judgment of the country by the dissolution of the legislature for the purpose and that the new legislature should adopt and pass it by similar majorities in both the chambers. You will thus see that this procedure ensures not only caution and deliberate discussion but gives to the country the advantages of a referendum before its constitution can be interfered with.

There is one section devoted to the subject of the creation of a Court of Impeachment for the trial of ministers on charges brought against them as such.

I desire next to invite your attention to the question how this responsible government is to become an accomplished fact technically, if our rulers are prepared, as we expect them to be, to consent to the immediate establishment of it. There are three ways by which this problem can be solved: (1) by a statute of Parliament, (2) by Letters Patent of His Majesty the King-Emperor and by instructions by the Secretary of State for India, (3) and by an Act of the Indian Legislature. The first and the last would be most difficult to achieve and when achieved, by no means most satisfactory for all practical purposes. We

have seen the mentality of the Parliament, especially of the House of Lords, as displayed in connection with the two recent matters vitally affecting the freedom and well-being of this country, namely, the Reform Act and Rules and the Punjab Tragedy. The key-note of the mind and spirit of Parliament inferable from conduct on these two occasions as on many others, is to be found in their contempt of the vital rights of the people of this country and the upholding by all possible means the power and prestige of the existing Government and bureaucracy of India. We cannot easily forgive, much less forget, the resolution of the Lords on Lord Finlay's motion to defend and even consecrate the wilful murders of the "splendid beast", General Dyer. I am sure that you would be most anxious to avoid the House of Lords if we can get our responsible government without being obliged to have recourse to it. I believe, we can.

I would respectfully ask you to dismiss from all consideration the third of the methods mentioned above. Even if it be possible for us to get the elected and non-official members of the new Indian Legislature to act in concert and to originate a measure, for the conversion of the existing system into responsible government, which, in my humble opinion, they have the power to do, the bureaucracy would not allow the successful passage and termination of such a measure in anything like the form which we should like to have, or in any form at all. By law and rules they have immense powers of obstruction to enactment of popular measures.

Victoria, Cape Colony, and Natal converted their governments with merely representative legislatures into governments with ministerial responsiblity to the legislature which were approved by the Sovereign by Order in Council and without any reference to Parliament.

I have now come to the second of the two methods and I should crave your permission to detain you at some length on a consideration of it. In the first place, it must be remembered that the prerogative right of the English

King includes legislative powers and quasi-legislative powers except when restrained by parliamentary statute. On the other hand no parliamentary statute is constitutionally needed to change and elevate a merely representative government into a responsible government. Responsible government is merely a more efficient and a more perfect representative government. The responsible government of England is a development of the previous representative system. It does not owe its origin to any parliamentary statute. We all know that it was in view to get more and more money for carrying on the war on the continent against Louis XIV, that William III hit, under the advice of Sunderland, at the idea of constructing his ministry from that party in Parliament which commanded the confidence of the majority in the Commons, that party being then Whigs. Thenceforward conventions and usages due to several circumstances perfected the system of Cabinet Government and Parliamentary sovereignty. There are precedents in support of the view I ask you to accept, to be found in the history of the introduction of responsible government in the British Colonies. For instance, Transvaal and Orange Free State were constituted into responsible government by Letters Patent in 1906 and 1907 respectively. In several other instances in the colonies the change from representative to responsible government was effected by private instructions to the Colonial Governor from the Colonial Office without recourse to Imperial Legislation or even to Royal prerogative. Indeed, it would be difficult to imagine a parliamentary statute that can fully embody the conventions and usages governing parliamentary sovereignty and cabinet responsibility.

I should not attempt to conceal from ourselves that there are certain provisions in the Government of India Act 1919 which apparently tie the hands of our Gracious Sovereign in the exercise of his prerogative on our behalf in this connection. We have to look for them in the preamble and in Section 41 of the enacting part. The preamble says that it is the declared policy of Parliament to allow British India responsible government by stages

conditioned by the extent of confidence that can be reposed in the sense of responsibility of persons co-operating with the Government and that Parliament is the sole judge as to the time and manner of each advance. This is a most extraordinary claim by the British Parliament of absolute authority over the country and people of British India. May we ask what is the source of this authority so pompously claimed? Remember we had no voice in the election of the Commons and the House of Lords never pretended to be a hereditary reflection of the opinion of this country; but can Parliament advance such a claim as against the people of the United Kingdom itself whose creation they are? If it did make the attempt, that would be the last Parliament of the kind. Wherefrom then does it advance such a preposterous claim over and as against India? You would in vain search for any hint as to the source of this authority. It is nothing short of pretensions to a divine right to absolute rule over us. Having destroyed, some three centuries ago, the claim of Divine Right of the English Kings and having declared that the relation between the people of England and their kings rests upon an original compact, it is a mockery of all political principles and equity for British Parliament to advance such a claim as against poor India. We have protested and must continue to protest against the manifest injustice to the people of this country involved in this claim. Any such claim by the British Parliament can only be made on behalf of the British people. Is it pretended that the people of the United Kingdom ever claimed such a right over the people of this country? They can only do so if the people of India are the slaves and property of the people of England. The claim is a negation of all principle of sovereignty in a people and of the first principles of self-determination in the maintenance and protection of which the greatest war on this planet was fought by England and her Allies. This claim is an insult to the nation of India and a fraud and a huge fraud, upon their God-given rights and upon their rights admittedly as British citizens.

The Parliament of England does not apppear to have a historic memory. We all know that the United States of America protested and fought less against the enacting portion of the Stamp Act and more against the preamble of it. The evil caused by the imposition of the tax was considered as constituting a much lesser actual grievance than the magnitude of expected tyranny involved in the claim set out in the preamble that the British Parliament could tax the colonies without their own consent. Burke declared that that preamble could not be declaratory of a right and could only recite a previously existing one, and he described it as a "phantom," as a "quiddity," "a thing without a substance and without even a name." We might justly say therefore that the declaration made in this preamble of the Divine Right to govern the people of India is a "phantom", "quiddity," "a thing without a substance and even without a name."

Assuming for a moment that the preamble of our Act involves sound principles and declarations of parliamentary rights as against us, it is not binding on us or on our Gracious Sovereign, because it is a settled juridical principle that a preamble is no part of the enactment, and is no law.

There is also another principle of interpretation of British Parliamentary Statutes to which I would call your attention. It is a canon of interpretation and it is without an exception that the Sovereign of England cannot be affected in his prerogative or property by any parliamentary statute without his own consent thereto and unless he is expressly named in it or included by irresistible implication. And the fact that His Majesty did not exercise his long dormant power of veto cannot be deemed to be consent to this extraordinary provision.

This last canon of interpretation applies also to the provisions contained in Section 41 of the Act. That Section says that, at the end of ten years from the passing of this Act, the Secretary of State for India shall appoint a Commission with the concurrence of each House of

Parliament and with the approval of His Majesty for the purpose of inquiring into the working of this Act and then make recommendations in one of three ways: (1) to increase the powers of the legislature presumably the local legislatures, (2) or leave them alone, (3) or to curtail them. Nothing is said anywhere in the Act as to what is the consequence if any of the four events on the happening of which this Commission should come into existence does not take place, that is to say if the Secretary of State fails to act as directed or if either House of Parliament declines to give its assent to this proposal or if His Majesty disapproves of it. It is very clear that these provisions are of the nature of administrative instructions and are merely directory and not mandatory law. The Right Hon'ble Mr. Fisher admitted that this section would not prevent a revision of the whole new system in less than ten years, and it is only a right conferred upon the people of India that such an inquiry should take place at the end of at least ten years. We can well afford to waive this commission.

If then the system of responsible government can be immediately established for the government of this country by simple executive process, the very natural question is whether the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for India would consent to co-operate with us and induce the Cabinet to concur with him and advise His Majesty to be graciously pleased to issue the necessary instructions by Letters Patent under the Great Seal. We have seen him occasionally rising to lofty eloquence in defence of our rights. It is true, but too painfully true, that his acts in no way breathe the liberality and wisdom of such occasional eloquent statements. Perhaps, it is open to him and his admirers to think of the same excuse as was the plea of Charles II who when twitted that he never said a foolish thing and never did a wise one, made a splendid repartee that his wise words were his own but that the foolish acts were his ministers and to say that his (Mr. Montagu's) words in eloquent defence of our national rights were exclusively his own but that his hands are greatly tied as to his acts. If such a plea is put

forward on behalf of our Secretary of State, we cannot say that there is not some real basis for it. But this demand of ours to establish responsible government by his advice to the King-Emperor without the legal assistance of Parliament would give him a splendid opportunity when he could act as wisely as ever he spoke for us. No doubt it would be perhaps safer to get the concurrence of the Commons for the proposal as the Cabinet depends for its existence upon the good will of the Commons. But we all know that the present House of Commons has, in view to win the late war and under the stress of it, been well disciplined into amiability of disposition towards the coalition Cabinet, especially towards the present Prime Minister. May we not hope that they would not grudge poor India a share of this generosity? If this course is impracticable in the opinion of the Secretary of State and the Cabinet, then it is for the Right Hon'ble Mr. Montagu to see whether the grave political situation affecting the vital interests of both India and the British Empire does not call for courage on his part and whether, following the precedents of several distinguished Colonial Secretaries, he should not issue instructions to the Viceroy on his own responsibility in view to change the arbitrary and merely representative Government of India into full responsible Government. He would thereby earn the undying gratitude of the teeming millions of India and achieve a glory such as has scarcely fallen to the lot of any English statesman.

The very disquieting programme outlined in the preamble to the Government of India Act 1919 which is meant to raise in us a dim and distant vision of reaching a free government for our political and economic existence involves no honest and recognized principles of civilized society and is altogether disloyal to our title-deed in support of our claim for the immediate establishment of responsible government. You will remember that the declaration of rights secured by the people of England as the fruit of their glorious revolution of 1688 rests upon the doctrine of an original compact between the people of England and their king. And the one great charge against

King James II was that he broke and violated this solemn compact between him and his subjects. This doctrine was based on no historic evidence but on the theory of a philosopher, namely Hooker, the author of "Ecclesiastical Polity".

Turn we now to the Hindu idea of polity. All ancient authority is agreed as to the origin and development of kingship in India. In the beginning all people were good, and peace and harmony and industry among them were maintained by mutual good feeling of the people themselves without a political government. Gradually degeneracy and disorder arose and there was menace of anarchy in the society. Then the people assembled together and framed a code of laws for themselves, which corresponds to the English Declaration of Rights of 1688 and then proceeded to establish a government and elect a king and the first king so elected by the people was "Manu." He was to rule and protect the people according to law and he was to receive as consideration annually a portion of the grains produced and of the other income of the people. During the palmy days of ancient India, the government of the country was fully equal and more than equal, in guaranteeing and securing the people's freedom and prosperity, to any modern state and a high degree of civilization was the fruit of this polity; art and science were cultivated and flourished to a degree to which the Europeans have not done full justice. Hindus not only produced philosophy, religious and secular, which has been the admiration and even the consolation of the world, but also it was the Hindus who invented the system of decimal fractions, Algebra and the game of chess. The Hindu astronomer, Aryabhatta, discovered the solar system and the precession of equinoxes several centuries before Copernicus. The system of civil administration was perfected to a degree rarely reached in modern times. The theory of the original compact between king and people was ever kept alive so much so that when the State failed to discover and restore property lost by robbery, the State had to make adequate compensation to the loser.

Helpless subjects, *viz.*, minors, idiots, aged, and women in pregnancy were all maintained and protected by the State. The duties and obligations of the king were maintained and enforced by several sanctions, the sanction of public opinion, of religion, and the right of revolution. It was part of ancient Hindu polity that a king who misgoverned could be deposed by the people and replaced by any of his children and even by other relations and strangers. The reign of law in ancient India was supreme and the king was as much bound by it as any of his subjects. It must be remembered that the ancient Hindu king was not the maker of laws. The Hindu Law was evolved from the Shastras and supplemented by customs and usages and the whole was interpreted by judges. That the law was obeyed by the king was an accepted canon and test for appreciating a particular king's reign. Says the Tamil saint, Tiruvalluvar: "Behold the prince who wieldeth the sceptre in accordance with the law: seasonal rains and rich harvests have their home in his land." The position of ancient India may be summed up in the words of Professor Max Muller: "Take any of the burning questions of the day—popular education, higher education, parliamentary representation, codification of laws, finance, emigration, poor-law and whether you have anything to teach, and to try, or anything to observe and to learn, India will supply you with a laboratory such as exists nowhere else." It is clear from all these facts that the ancient Hindu king owed his authority entirely to the people and that he forfeited his right as king for misconduct. The idea of the sovereignty of the people and the fact that the highest power emanated from them cannot be more conclusively proved.

Then we come to the period of contact of this ancient Hindu civilization with Arab civilization brought into India by the Mussulman invaders. The political theory of the ancient Arabs was that sovereignty belongs to God and that he delegated it to the people and that the Khalif was his executive representative and he should administer the affairs of the people according to the law which was no

more of his making than the ancient Hindu law was and he was as much bound by the laws as any of his subjects. Says Mr. Justice Abdur Rahim, the distinguished Judge of the Madras High Court, in his valuable work of "Principles of Mahomedan Jurisprudence": "In the Mahomedan system sovereignty primarily belongs to God, but as He has delegated to the people powers of legislation and of absolute control over the administration, it must be held that next to God the sovereign power resides in the people. It would also appear that the Mahomedan law does not admit of the sovereign power being dissociated from the people however they might choose to exercise it." He elsewhere in the same treatise says: "The right to administer the laws as well as the affairs generally of the community, belongs to the community itself which may exercise the right through its chosen representatives." Prof. Dicey's elegant formula that the political sovereignty belongs to the people and that the government is its legal sovereign aptly applies to the Mahomedan concept thus stated by Sir Abdur Rahim.

Thus the ancient Hindu idea of polity and the Arab idea of polity were substantially identical, as regards the conception of political sovereignty as essentially residing in the people and the derivation of legal sovereignty from it, at all events. It is worth while to mention that the ancient Hindus paid the highest regard to the theory and practice of government. The science of polity was described in figurative language as the "nectar churned from the ocean" of all sciences put together. It is unnecessary for me to add that the modern Indians, whatever their present religious creed may be, are descendants of ancient Hindus in the main with a very small proportion among Mussulmans who are not such, if we omit the extremely small and negligible communities of the Jews and Parsis, and this small proportion are the inheritors and professors of the Arab idea of polity. So, one is warranted in the statement that the modern Indian idea of polity is that the sovereignty belongs entirely to

the people, and that all power to rule over them emanates from them by consent and compact.

This idea of an original compact between the people and their king and their right to dismiss and replace him for misconduct or degeneracy is ever present to the mind of the modern Indian. England owes the origin of her political relations with India to this unique Indian character. It is authoritatively admitted that England has succeeded to the status and rights of the Hindu and Mahomedan sovereigns. If it has any meaning, the succession must mean to the rights as well as obligations of the best Hindu and the best Mahomedan kings and not those of the effete and wicked ones whom the people of this country Hindu and Mussalman replaced by inviting the English and co-operating with them in every way. The political entry of the English into India is parallel to the entry of King William III as sovereign of England. The foundations of English sovereignty in India may be truly said to have been laid in the middle of the eighteenth century with the success of Clive at Arcot. In the siege of Arcot he was besieged by a numerous army including French soldiers while his own garrison consisted of 120 English soldiers and 200 Indian sepoys. He was hard pressed and provisions fell short and starvation stared them all in the face. The sepoys displayed a remarkable trait of Indian selflessness and offered all the substantial food available to their English comrades, themselves subsisting on the water in which the food was cooked and strained. Complete success was the fruit of this devotion on the part of the Indians. One important result of this was that the brave Maharatta Chieftain, Morary Rao of Gooty, with 6,000 brave soldiers of his at once threw in his lot with the English as he saw them helping themselves. He had been wooed by the French and English. It is thus clear that the people and chieftains of India desired to save their country, distracted by feuds between princes and by anarchy, by making England legal sovereign of India. Malleson in his "History of the French in India" says that the siege of Arcot "presents one of the most glorious pictures of Anglo-

Indian history : it is the turning point in the eastern career of the English and the foundation-stone of their present Empire." And subsequent history proves that throughout their career the English almost entirely relied upon Indian co-operation both as to money and men. Sir Alfred Lyall of the Indian bureaucracy and by no means one of the best advocates of Indian national freedom, admits that from the first the people of India welcomed and assisted the English in their acquisition of India. It is thus conclusively clear that the political relation of England to India is one of voluntary compact between her and the people of India.

If behind the extraordinary claim involved in the preamble there really lurks, as several assert and many of us suspect, a feeling that is based on the right of conquest, we must distinctly and most emphatically repudiate the sinister doctrine of this English might *versus* Indian right and we are well warranted in so repudiating it by the conclusive historic proof to the contrary as stated above. Assuming for argument's sake that British India is a conquered dependency of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland—and let us not forget that India has never been formally annexed to England as a conquered country—yet we are entitled to deny the claim of mere might as against our right. The glorious French Revolution has established the divine principle that every people are one person and are entitled ever to provide for its own salvation. France then established for the benefit of mankind that there is no such thing as war and conquest except as a means for self-defence owing to lack of international sanction for enforcing international justice and that there is no such thing as a mere war of conquest and in the recent Great War it was the proclaimed maxim of England and her Allies that war was only justifiable in self-defence for punishing international misconduct and for the protection of the rights of self-determination of the people, in short, for making the whole world "fit and safe" for its people to live in. But if our claim of an original compact between us and the people of England is repudiated and ignored by the Parliament of England on the ground

of right of conquest, may we in our turn ask the question on what ground the English claim of original compact on which the glorious Revolution of 1688 and the immortal Declaration of Rights are founded, rests? Is not England a more conquered country than India? With which king did the people of Britain enter into their original compact? With Julius Cæsar, the Roman? With Egbert the German? With Knute, the Dane? With William, the Norman? or with Cromwell? or with which other? There is *no historic proof* of an original compact between the people of England and any of their kings. Hooker started the theory and the great statesmen of the English Revolution of 1688 welcomed the idea and made it their basis of the Declaration of their Rights and the condition of English kingship. The English idea of an original compact between the king and his subjects is theory first and fact next, presumed from the theory. The Indian idea of such a compact is fact first and theory afterwards, inferred from the fact. Ours therefore is a more valid and sounder title-deed for responsible government than that of the people of England. And the claim of the Parliament that they are the sole judges of our salvation here below is as empty as it is pompous and it is death to us as a free people with God-given rights or self-determination, if we allow this unnatural claim to exist.

Her part of the compact India has been throughout maintaining and performing in integrity and in absolute loyalty. We not only replaced the effete princes of India by the English but we also fought our countrymen for the maintenance of the English sovereignty in India at the time of the great mutiny; subsequently when the world war broke out, we enthusiastically joined with England and co-operated with them and with the Allies, for saving the world's freedom. While England was not yet quite ready and before the Dominion troops could arrive at the scene of strife and before America and Italy thought of joining England and France, our troops, ill-fed and ill-drilled and ill-equipped as they are, went to France and mingling with

her brave soldiers made the historic shambles of Flanders and died in erecting and maintaining there the trenches of the world's liberty to arrest the progress of the mightiest foe which human liberty has yet had. We were further buoyed up in our enthusiasm and spirit of self-sacrifice by the new and expanded angle of bright English vision towards Indian rights and Indian aspirations and when in consequence of Turkey's temerity and folly in throwing in her lot with Germany, our Mussulman brethren were subjected to a phenominal strain, from the necessity caused by this unforeseen event to divide their allegiance and to weigh their political allegiance against their religions, England gave them solemn pledges to preserve the Khalifat and adjured them to stand by their secular sovereign, India was determined to stand by England and she did her very best to enable England and her Allies to win this greatest war on earth. Armistice was reached and peace was within sight. But alas! the misfortune and the misery of British India began almost simultaneously and tragedy after tragedy overtook her. And here we are in a position without a parallel in the history of civilized mankind.

It would require the genius, the poetic imagination and the feelings of noble indignation of a Burke to draw a true picture of our plight now. But we must make an honest endeavour to analyse and interpret the state of universal distress of the country, of masses and classes, in terms of the real causes, as far as we can. Speaking negatively, I venture to think that this unique situation is little due to high prices and is by no means connected with the vague awakening of the new consciousness of people's rights in consequence of the great world war. Positively we might think of some five or six well-defined and well-marked events that may be rightly deemed to be the constituent factors of our present situation:—

(*a*) While, by reason of the proclaimed principles and aims of England and the Allies for carrying on this great war and by virtue of the authoritative pledges to us, we were fondly looking forward to the dawn of a new and

bright era for us, the nation was taken aback when the Rowlatt Commission was suddenly appointed under the auspices of the Indian bureaucracy and came out with astounding recommendations to subject the people, to more and more repressive administrative processes, the fruit of which was the immediate and the hasty passing of the draconian Rowlatt Law, the Government flouting the best opinion of our best men and the unanimous feeling of the country against those recommendations and against the legislative measure based on them.

(*b*) Out of this situation, entirely and wantonly created by the bureaucracy, a new situation was adroitly manufactured with the result that the great Punjab Tragedy was enacted and a dark page, the darkest in the world's annals as yet known, was added to the history of India. I need not summarise the events that make up these frightful transactions. I shall here content myself by referring you to three classic documents on the subject: the minority report of the Hunter Commission, the report of the Sub-Committee appointed by the Congress, and the address of the President of the Special Congress at Calcutta.

(*c*) The agony of the Punjab and the sympathetic grief of the whole country were both increased by the manner in which this dark episode in the British administration of India was, from start to finish, handled and dealt with by the Government of India and by His Majesty's Coalition Government and the Parliament, especially the House of Lords. The one astounding fact that stands out in bold relief as underlying all these transactions here and in England is an unnatural feeling of contempt of the people of this country amounting to little short of a feeling on the part of the authorities that we, the people of India, hardly belong to humanity, the existence of which feeling was pompously exhibited, as in regard to the claim of sacredness of the person of the Englishman.

(*d*) Then came the huge Khalifat fraud. The pledges solemnly made to our Mussulman fellow-subjects

of His Gracious Majesty were edited and quibbled away in the light of success and ancient prejudices of colour and creed and the Sultan of Turkey has been made a mere shadow of what he was, in power, prerogative, and territory and even as to the means of self-defence. Apart from the pledges, so wantonly broken, it is but easy to see that the terms of peace, which the Sultan was compelled to accept, were more severe and crushing and humiliating than those offered to any other people in Europe defeated in the Great War. I desire to call your attention to the adroit attempt made in view to prejudicially affect the state of growing union and the feelings of cordiality between the Mussulmans and the non-Mussulmans of India that the latter have no interest in this question. I must ask you not to allow yourselves to be deluded into a belief that there is any substance in such a statement. We Indians are so situated that we all must in every way work in harmony and stand together or fall together. Hence it is but natural that Hindus sympathise with their Mussulman brethren and sisters in their genuine and intense grief in this connection; and, besides, the cause of the national union is sacred *per se*. But there is an additional aspect to which I must call your attention. The reasons, expressed and implied, for the terms of Peace offered to Turkey, the character of the agitation that led to the adoption of those severe terms as well as the nature of the terms themselves, all conspire to disclose the ancient and the ineradicably disquieting doctrine of Europe *versus* Asia and we, non-Muslim Indians, have an equally vital interest with our Muslim fellow-subjects in repudiating and fighting this doctrine. Turkey is only good for Asia and Asia is good enough for Turkey. The treaty provides by foreign interference for the protection of European minorities in Turkish territories against Turkish tyranny but leaves the Turks themselves severely alone in this connection. If this doctrine is sound, may we ask the pertinent question why Europe and England in particular do not leave Asia and Africa severely alone?

(*e*) Then there is the treatment accorded to Indians abroad in the British Colonies. Their position is growing

more and more intolerable every day as events in Fiji and East Africa conclusively show and more and more degrading as the evidence collected by the Rev. Mr. Andrews with the combined spirit of humanity of Howard and Cowper amply proves. For my part it is difficult to imagine that it is at all possible for us Indians to protect and safeguard the interests of our countrymen abroad while we ourselves are semi-slaves of the British Empire. Every interest of ours requires that our countrymen in the British Colonies should be brought back to India as early as possible in as large numbers as possible for their own sake and in view to co-operate with their countrymen in the making of the Indian nation. While England is unwilling or unable to accord and guarantee protection of the Indians within British Colonies, at least to the extent to which it protects the French and the Dutch in them, our substantial grievance and discontent are bound to remain unabated. And any plan which we, as Congress, should think of devising in view to our political and economic amelioration should include the problem of our countrymen abroad especially in the British Colonies.

(*f*) Lastly, the situation is extremely complicated and our national helplessness is rendered the more disquieting and depressing in consequence of the new Reform Act and the rules and regulations thereunder. I have already alluded to the startling claim made by the Parliament that not only now but at every stage of our national life, it (the Parliament) is to be the sole judge of our fitness for reaching responsible government. You will in vain search throughout the Colonial history of Britain for a precedent. The claim made to tax the United States of America was far less serious and fraught with far less danger to those colonies than this claim advanced as against us. It is but natural that the country is deeply concerned by this novel announcement. Coming to the provisions of the enactment, we are in possession of the considered view of the entire country on the subject. From the first the Congress repudiated the soundness of the principles underlying the

whole scheme, affirmed the total inadequacy and even dangerous nature of the provisions and maintained that the country is quite fit for immediate responsible government. The whole scheme is without the guarantee of historic experience and precedent and the reason persistently assigned for adopting so unparalleled a course is preposterous. It was said and it is still being said that no other scheme could be thought of. But, why make a distinction between India and any other British "dominion beyond the seas"? It must be remembered that not only the five great Dominions (Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Newfoundland) were allowed responsible government, but also several other much smaller colonies, such as Jamaica, were all easily granted this blessing. We are naively told this is a temporary structure on which to build the future grand edifice of responsible government, but what honest reasons can be assigned for adopting so strange and unprecedented a plan? The Central Government of India is to continue autocratic and despotic and the subordinate governments alone are to have this experiment. Not only the provinces are to be converted into quasi-states to begin with, but each state is to be dual in sovereignty and the better and the stronger part in financial power and prestige is to belong to the bureaucracy. It is admitted that the whole scheme is in reality federalism though without the name. This is a new and perilous Utopia. History has not furnished any example by way of a successful model for so strange a course. Federalism has ever been an attempt on the part of separate sovereign nations and states whether Colonial or Independent, to unite together by compact and construct a central government for the benefit of all of them by surrendering a portion of their respective sovereign powers. And the progress has always been, in healthy federations, towards the augumentation of the powers and functions of the central government in view to increasing efficiency and prosperity of the whole group. A most remarkable example is that of the Federal Colonies of South Africa who gave up their sovereign powers of their own accord in view that the Central Federal Gevernment might become

a unitary Government in the general interests of all and the previous sovereign states became subordinate provinces giving up their legislative organs retaining power only to draft special ordinances for each particular province to be enacted into law by the one legislature of the country. But for India the process proposed and adopted is a contrary course, God alone knows why. India has ever been a unitary country and when it consisted of several states there was no federation or attempt at federation at all. The India of Asoka and of Akbar were great unitary countries and their reigns were the brightest and the people were the freest in the history of India.

Let us next examine the hope held out to us that out of this strange scheme our future responsible government is to be evolved. Here, reason and history are altogether against this course. In Federal countries, the legislature is necessarily bicameral, one chamber representing the people of the whole federal government and the other chamber representing the separate and individual interests of the constituent sovereign states. If the executive government is to be responsible to the legislature in view to both the sets of interests, it must command the confidence of the majority in each chamber at one and the same time. But this is hardly possible in practice and if the two chambers do not concur, it would be impossible to make the executive government responsible at all. On the other hand it will be obviously unjust to make the executive government depend for its existence and power on the confidence of the majority in one chamber only. For, it would be then abandoning the interests represented by the other chamber. Hence, it is that no true federal government is a responsible government like that of England or France. It is responsible, not to the legislature, but to the people as I have already remarked, the responsibility to be enforced by forfeiture of confidence at every new election and by separate impeachment of responsible members constituting the government when guilty of grave crimes. Except in this extremely feeble way there is no day of reckoning for the Federal Executive.

The difficulty and inadequacy of the remedy by impeachment was long ago pointed out in the Grand Remonstrance of 1641. President Wilson says that the surrender of people's rights to Government is greater and their control of it is less in a Federal than in a Responsible Government. In Switzerland, being a very small country, this great federal infirmity is obviated by a provision of a referendum to the people, which course is impossible in so large a country as British India. The one country that is trying the double experiment of both federalism and responsible government is Australia. But the system is yet on its trial and two great authorities Mr. Bernard Wise and Prof. Marriott say that either its federalism would kill its responsibility or its responsibility would kill its federalism. Considering the tendency of the United States which is making a rapid march towards the unitary form, it is most likely that Australian responsibility would kill Australian federalism. If this be the peril in a truly federal system, we must tremble when we are told we can reach a responsible government out of the false and pseudo system of federalism proposed for us.

This system has been thought of and constructed on purpose to conciliate the ancient bureaucracy, most unwilling to abate a jot of their power and prestige, actual and imaginary. The whole involves a double peril, perpetual friction between the bureaucracy and the peoples' representatives and inter-provincial jealousy and strife to be designedly ripened into international jealousy and strife. Already a bitter inter-provincial strife has begun on account of the highly artificial and inequitable financial arrangements affecting the several constituent provinces. Under the name of "Reforms", perilous principles and provisions have been thus introduced effectually to divide the country into separate peoples to be ever animated by bitter jealousy.

This being the grave political situation, the country and the Congress are agreed that the one remedy for its prompt liquidation is the immediate establishment of responsible government for British India leaving it to its

people and their representatives to revise and readjust the provincial system of government on sound lines tending to domestic harmony and progress. The divine principle that should characterise the entire fiscal system of the coming responsible government is obviously the principle of equal sacrifice by all the inhabitants of the whole country in proportion to the income of each and subject to uniform exemption for minimum subsistence on the principle of the assessment of the income-tax.

The one question everywhere asked is : what is the sanction behind and backing up our demand? What is the weapon, peaceful weapon, short of rebellion, that can compel England to let us have this form of government which has been only promised to us as a dim and delusive goal to be reached by wading through unparalleled and perilous labyrinths of system of provincial autonomy and enforced unnatural federalism? This is a most embarrassing question and I confess that I have ever felt most nervous and most diffident as often as I thought of a satisfactory reply to what appears to be the most knotty political conundrum. Yet, we must find an honest solution of the problem and on that solution hangs the fate of our salvation for ever. We must proceed to the work therefore most religiously, and most cautiously and yet with courage. I venture to submit that it would be safest to rely upon history and upon the practical experience and political wisdom which happily the history of free countries supplies to us, if we would only seek that assistance of history earnestly and in humility. To the past and to patterns and systems tested by experience to be sound or otherwise we must look for light and guidance and to nothing else if we would walk on firm and safe ground. In answer to this one vital question, the Special Congress at Calcutta recommended by a majority a programme of non-co-operation. It will be observed that, apart from the programme, the scope and the nature of the principle itself and the necessity for adopting it was not separately discussed and debated. As to the great necessity for the adoption by us of some such weapon as that of organized

non-co-operation with the rulers in view to reach our full freedom immediately, there can be no two honest opinions. We have been petitioning and praying and agitating these thirty-five years and over for a real and substantial voice in the government of our own country, but in vain. On the other hand, the authorities here and at home have driven us to the climax of facing the consequences of our national helplessness to protect ourselves and our countrymen in the British Colonies in the possession and enjoyment of elementary rights of person and property. Nay more. While we are in grief, in universal grief, as if the whole country is one house of death, injuries and insults continue to be added and heaped upon us. Look at the compensations awarded in connection with the Punjab disturbances. Whether you consider the principle or the measure of the money compensation awarded to European sufferers as distinguished from that awarded to Indians, there is but one conclusion possible, that our rights are flouted and we are treated as sub-human beings. Look at the Esher Commission and look at the appointment of Sir O'Dwyer on it in mockery of our grief and of our opinion of him. Look at the memorial for General Dyer and the necessity for a Government Order to restrain the bureaucracy from subscribing to it. Look at the proceedings of the European Association at Calcutta justifying the massacres by General Dyer even at this late hour, after eminent counsel in England had declared the massacres to be wilful murders. No, the age of pious annual budgets of resolutions by us is gone for ever. We are bound, if we won't perish as a people, we are bound to think of and adopt a method to force England to let us get into freedom at once. The question for us to consider is whether in our own interests, the principle and programme of non-co-operation actually adopted is justifiable and adequate for the purpose we have in view. The exact nature and scope of the principle has not been defined and it is difficult to define it. It is to be hoped that the principle is elastic enough to include passive resistance on concrete occasions and to specific measures whether legislative or administrative and also to include strikes, sectional, vocational and otherwise. You will

remember that His Excellency the Viceroy in Council has pronounced the principle of non-co-operation as unconstitutional because it is intended to paralyse the existing administration. It is a most astounding pronouncement. His Excellency in Council, who is in the main, responsible for the darkest page in the British history of India, would have done us a great service if, in the same remarkable *communique*, he had vouchsafed for our benefit what exactly our constitution is and where it is to be found. If, for a moment, it is pretended that the constitution of England is applicable to India, would he be pleased to tell us what part of it, what principle in it, the principle and plan of non-co-operation offends? On the other hand, the whole British system of administration rests on the basis of non-co-operation, of conqueror against conquered, of Europe against Asia, of white people against coloured people. And several discriminatory laws in India and administrative measures bristle with sinister principles of this kind of non-co-operation and are wholly unconstitutional from the standpoint of the British Constitution. The new diarchial system of provincial autonomy is one entire homage to the chronic doctrine of non-co-operation of the British bureaucracy in India with the children of the soil. It is a mockery therefore on the part of the Government to characterize Mahatmaji Gandhi's principle of non-co-operation as unconstitutional. On the other hand, the essential principle of his movement being renunciation and self-sacrifice and non-violence, whereas the other doctrine of non-co-operation is aggressive, selfish, and sordid, we are entitled justly to claim that this principle of non-co-operation is sacred and directed to secure and preserve our legitimate rights and our honest enjoyment thereof. It is not in support of might *versus* right.

We are entitled and bound to adopt such a principle without favour and without fear to consequences and guided solely by a consideration of it as a means to the end of our self-preservation as a people. To that subject we shall now turn.

With that single aim, namely, national self-preservation and national liberty and attainment of immediate responsible government as the only means to achieve that end, we shall proceed to examine how far the programme of non-co-operation adopted by the Special Congress at Calcutta is suitable. As we all know, it consists of several items and a few more items are also intended to be added to them. I do not think it is necessary or that it would serve a very material purpose to traverse all of them at length. The item relating to the abandonment of titles may be left alone, response or no response to this demand meaning very little in promoting or affecting the cause we all have at heart. It strikes me that, to the demand that the honorary offices should be abandoned, an exception might be made in favour of judicial offices as, on the whole, greater independence and justice is and can be had from non-official Magistrates and Judges than from official stipendiary ones and that too in a system where there is no separation of the Judicial from the Executive. We may also dispose in a few words of the item relating to the Reformed Councils. The issue as to this is no longer a live issue and may be treated as tried and disposed of. And it is of very little interest for the next few years. If it must be admitted that considerable success has attended this part of the programme of non-co-operation, even those who are altogether against the movement of non-co-operation can well afford not to regret this success. The evils of the whole Reform Scheme I have already pointed out. We may challenge the authorities here and in England to import the best practical statesmen from England in order to work this system for us as the peoples' ministers with the unenviable and disquieting portion of powers and privileges vouchsafed for them under the new regime. We shall ask them thus to teach us an object lesson and demonstration for training ourselves later on for running such a system and thence wade our way to the goal of responsible government. In fine, I venture to say that we cannot admit the experiment to be a thoroughly honest and disinterested one. If several nationalists once thought it best to seek election into the Reformed Councils, it was for

the double reason that the Amritsar Congress and our friends in the Parliament, the Labour Members, recommended that we should enter it if only to constitute a well-organized opposition and to expose its infirmities from within rather than from without. But, on the whole, the country has come to the conclusion that the whole system is bound to be an utter failure both financially and as a temporary platform by getting on which we are to reach responsible government by no means clearly looming in the horizon. On the whole, the nationalists were well advised therefore, in finally declining to seek and occupy a position where it might be said at the end that we were responsible for the failure, and not the fatal inherent infirmities of the novel system.

The most important item in the programme relates to the withdrawal of students from Government and Aided schools. You have had the experience of the movement in this particular for the past few months. It is for you now to determine and to declare whether this part of the programme should be affirmed and carried out. Let us not, for a moment, forget the one object of the whole movement with which it has been initiated. It is to force the hands of Government to grant our very legitimate request, namely, to establish responsible Government and to redress our Khilafat grievance. Is it possible that emptying Government and aided institutions would anywise paralyze the Government here and in England in its administration and compel it to grant our object? If the Government are relieved from maintaining schools and colleges, would not the money be available for other purposes—over eight crores of rupees annually? And is this a national advantage? In order to replace them by our own national institutions should we not have funds which will give us a similar annual income for which a capital of about 200 crores would be necessary? And there is the very large amount needed for buying lands, constructing buildings, and laboratories and educational museums and furnishing them. Is it possible for the country to supply that money in the near future? All this

is needed to reach the superior benefit expected from purely national institutions. Equipment and teaching staff being equal in extent and quality, there can be no doubt that purely national institutions without any control from the bureaucratic government would be a distinct advantage both individually and nationally. It is for you to say whether this object, to be reached by an amount of money which we cannot dream of realising in the near future, is anywise related to the initial and only immediate object of the movement, namely, redress of our grievances in less than a year. Lot of collateral and consequential matters have also to be considered by us in the working of the programme. It has hitherto been an accepted maxim of our political life that the students should be left in calm atmosphere to pursue their career and that it is injurious to them and to the rising generation to draw them into the highly excitable vortex of practical politics which is fast changing in our country as well, into party politics. Can the propaganda be carried on without violating this cardinal and very healthy maxim? We seek Swaraj. The bedrock of a healthy nation is the sound family. Will not this propaganda separate students from parents and grandparents and from elder brothers and sisters oftener than not? How long is this process to continue if England persists, however perversely, in declining to allow us to erect our own responsible government at once? Will not, at the end of this period—none of us can say how long it will be—the country be so much the poorer and sufferer in every way for our student population being suddenly debarred from pursuing their further career? It would be a totally different thing if students are asked to give up Government and Aided institutions whenever and wherever national educational institutions have been fully established and are ready to receive them and educate them.

But there is another and a most serious aspect of the problem of national reconstruction, awaiting your consideration. Is it or is it not necessary as the very first step in the process that free and universal primary education for the masses should be at once provided for and started

by the people of this country? Of course we are all agreed that the country stands in need of every kind and degree of education—elementary, secondary and collegiate and professional, scientific and technical, all simultaneously. But having regard to the resources of poverty-stricken Indians, is it prudent and just to the masses of the people that we should, at this grave crisis, think of replacing University, Collegiate and Secondary Institutions merely because they are in the hands of Government and more or less controlled by Government, by independent national institutions and continue to starve the masses? We must not forget that in our country about 94 per cent. of the population are absolutely illiterate, while only less than 4 per cent. receive any kind of instruction in schools and colleges. We have to provide at least primary instruction for this large percentage of from 94 to 96 per cent. of the entire nation. The education of our masses is behind most civilised countries. Taking the test of the percentage of the pupils receiving primary education to the whole population, the proportion in our country is about one-tenth of the same in the United States, one-eighth of it in England and Germany and one-seventh of it in France and Japan while in secondary education India ranks higher than France and Japan. And what would be the cost of providing for the education of our masses? The Government cost of primary education is about Rs. 11 annually for each pupil but here, let us note, Government receives some school fees. Our institutions are to be entirely free. In addition we require hostels and scholarships if not provision for lodging and boarding in each institution for the instruction of the extremely poor. Besides, the teaching staff in the primary schools are now very ill-paid and the lower ones earn less than our unskilled labourers. In our national institutions this highly demoralising feature should be removed. We must take the cost to be much higher, therefore, than the present Government cost of Rs. 11, say Rs. 15 per pupil annually. Having regard to the short average life of Indians, let us take the approximate number of both boys and girls fit to receive primary instruction to be about 70 millions, less

than a fourth of the whole population as the rule that people from 15 to 50 years of age constitute half the population of a country applies to India as well. The annual cost of providing free education for this population would be approximately 105 crores. Let us add to this the cost of providing school buildings, play-grounds, hostels, and equipping them all and the cost will be enormous. And we must take to finding all this money as rapidly as we can. But let us have some idea of our national resources. The mean annual income of the people of India is between Rs. 20 and Rs. 30 say roughly Rs. 25 per head whereas mean annual income of the inhabitants of England is at least twenty times that. The exact figure would depend upon the exchange of course. We must gather our money from our own people. Let us not forget that an enormous proportion of our population are ill-fed, ill-clad, and ill-sheltered. It is not human to call upon these people to subject themselves to any the least self-sacrifice in money. We must find our money from the strata above these. But our middle classes are not equal to the wage earners of England and America on an average. Only our richest people may be said to be equal to the middle classes of those countries. From these two classes, namely, from the upper and the middle classes, is it possible for us, whatever may be their high ideals of self-sacrifice, to get the required amount now? Clearly it would be impossible. We cannot hope to get much, having regard to the low degree of our national savings apart from the income for many a long year to come. The degree of our resources in this respect depends upon the aggregate annual savings of British India. Exact figures cannot be obtained. But we can have some idea if we have regard to the fact that the estimated average wealth for India per head is about one of twenty-fourth of the same for the United Kingdom and one-fourth of Japan. Besides, there are vast numbers of rich foreigners in India whose savings should be deducted. The figure for the Indians would be found extremely low when compared with figures for the free countries of the world. But we must make a beginning and we must begin at once: and

here the choice of two problems, namely, whether we ought to begin starting National High Schools and Colleges and Universities, to replace the existing ones and to continue to neglect the education of the masses and the poor, or, whether we ought to use every available rupee for starting free primary education for the masses, presents itself justice to the masses and every national interest determines the choice easily. We *must* begin national primary education immediately. From this one standpoint alone it is for you to say whether this item of the programme should not be given up, at least, should not be suspended, till a more favourable economic opportunity presents itself.

I might add here that one essential condition of the success of democratic responsible Government as distinguished from aristocratic is an intelligent and vigilant universal public opinion and this is only possible in the highest perfection in a country of universal education. Besides, a true democracy implies universal suffrage and a universal suffrage where only less than 6 per cent. of the population receive any kind of instruction is futile and may be even at times dangerous.

Our next step is to secure the country's economic prosperity in the light of advancing modern science as fast as we can and this is only possible if we not only start scientific and technical instruction in our country on a wide basis but also send out capable students to the world abroad to receive specialised scientific and technical training, in the earlier stages of our progress at least, and also to import experts for assisting us in starting model industrial institutions and demonstrations. It is for you, therefore, to take up this problem in all seriousness and judiciously arrive at a conclusion whether or not all the available money should be devoted by us to these objects—primary and technical education and provision of scholarships for technical and scientific education abroad and for technical demonstrations and opening model industries in our own country.

Then there is the item relating to the withdrawal of pleaders from the established courts of law. Here also to

start with, we must put the test question to ourselves how such a withdrawal of our countrymen would in the least paralyse the Government and accelerate the attainment of our object. The legal profession has not been a great favourite with the bureaucracy. Now and then vague ideas were entertained by several of them of diminishing and regulating the numbers of the bar. Is it at all reasonable and practicable that thousands and thousands of young men, educated and equipped to become members of the bar at an enormous sacrifice in all poor and middle class families, should be suddenly asked to cut short their career and only career for which they are fit? The sudden withdrawal of the pleaders wholesale, especially the younger ones, if practicable and actually effected, would plunge their parents and families into immense misery. Are we satisfied, that this course is necessary for securing freedom, our national freedom? Does history furnish us with any similar example? On the other hand does it not furnish lesson to the contrary? The great English Constitution owes its origin and development as well to the line of great English judges as to her statesmen and warriors. There is a close relation between the science and practice of politics and the science and practice of law. In fact, both may be described as one science, the science of distinguishing right from wrong. Says Burke: "He was bred to law, which is, in my opinion, one of the first and noblest of human sciences: a science which does more to quicken and invigorate the understanding than all the other kinds of learning put together." And therefore it is we find that throughout the world the two classes, politicians and lawyers, are often identical. The great French Revolution, the dawn of modern political liberty, owed its success no less to the lawyers than to her statesmen and soldiers. The former two were mostly identical. The majority of the great Constituent Assembly of the glorious French Revolution were lawyers. This fact had a ludicrous effect on Burke, the great Liberal Statesman as he was, but who suddenly became a reactionary at the time and in consequence of the French Revolution. As he was well known to be an admirer of the legal profession, when in

reply to his most uncharitable attack on the doings of the Constituent Assembly, he was told it was all the doing of the lawyers, he was stunned but he at once recovered his presence of mind and found consolation in his imagination that they all must be very inferior lawyers. Do you consider that this item in the programme is in grateful memory of the Constituent Assembly of immortal glory?

This demand for the withdrawal of lawyers is further based on the ground that the movement would thereby facilitate the establishment of arbitration courts. Here again it is for you to discuss and determine whether it is possible and desirable at the same time that the regular courts established by law should be abolished and replaced entirely by arbitration courts. Private arbitration is of immense value in a society. The more petty offences, and plain cases of civil dispute between individuals and individuals are disposed of by private arbitration and reconciliation, the better it would be for the individuals concerned and for the society as well. Our private citizens, however enlightened and experienced, would not be able to handle and investigate complex cases of law involving consideration of highly delicate questions of right and wrong, arising from contract, express and implied, and from injuries voluntary, accidental and rash. Often too grave questions both as to the interpretation and validity of law, domestic and foreign and international arise for decision. The handling of such questions requires skilled and technical experience arising from a special and painful study of the law and jurisprudence and from experience at the bar presided over by skilled and learned judges. What is needed for obtaining true justice is a combination of both the sets of tribunals, that is judge and jury. If we abolish courts and if we abolish the profession of law, and nothing less the item means to be effectual, there would be a great social want which there would be no means of supplying. The result will be immediate increase of offences and criminal cases and gradual decay of national instinct for freedom. Those who have experience of courts and of the lower strata of society know that the masses are

on the one hand unable to analyse their grievances into bases for civil actions and civil remedies and on the other, little accustomed to restrain their passions and feelings of revenge and are in consequence most apt to take the law into their own hands and commit offences, in supposed redress of their grievances but more really in revenge. Let us remember that, as civilization advances, injuries would be multiplied by design, accident, and oversight and great skill and ingenuity are needed to investigate their true nature and to find suitable remedies for the injured in respect of the novel injuries. Let us not forget that freedom means the rule of law. But it is inconceivable that the "reign" and "majesty" of law can be secured and maintained without courts of law and without the profession of the law.

Taking these two items together, I venture to think that I shall be justified in asking you to consider whether any appreciable success of the movement which I humbly deny can ever be reached does not mean an unintentional and even unconscious proposal to rebarbarise the people of India, by no means a very auspicious preparation to establish and maintain the democratical form of responsible government which we all have so dear at heart.

You would all naturally ask me what then should be our programme if this programme is not adopted by us any longer. I will make an honest endeavour to give you an answer. In one word it is nation-building. We must take to nation-building at once, on a scale and in a manner to make up for lost time and fully equal to meet the situation as well caused by our own torpidity and hibernation of energies for centuries as by the bad faith and misconduct by our rulers. We are bent and rightly so on having immediate responsible government for our State. But let us not forget that the state is not quite the nation and the nation is not quite the state. The state is an instrument for the pupose of the developement and welfare of the nation. At the same time the healthy growth of both depends upon their interaction. If, therefore, we would have the best form of government and adapt it and develop

it so as to suit the genius of the people of this country, we should renovate the people in as great a perfection as it is possible for us to do without the true state to begin with. Great progress has been made since the Congress was started in the way of the unification of people and the mobilisation and augmentation of the national comaraderie of spirit. Thank God, the cumulative effect of the misfortunes that have recently overtaken the entire country has done more to unite us than centuries of universal national education and mission work for the purpose could have effected and this involuntary process of national unification is greatly expanded and intensified under the auspices of Mahatmaji Gandhi and the stalwart patriots who are co-operating with him: our everlasting gratitude and that of our children unborn is due to him and to them for this great and glorious service to our motherland. But yet we are not fully as great and vital a nation as we may well be and processes of further renovation must be immediately thought of by us and adopted and put into effect. The first and foremost is the education of the masses in as large and fast expanding a scale as we can endeavour to achieve. The Congress must at once appoint one special committee with power to appoint sub-committees charged with this important business and nothing else. They must collect funds and appoint active missionaries for starting vernacular schools by day and by night for the benefit of labourers, for holding lectures, demonstrations and so forth. Then we must deal with problems of our men abroad, especially in the British Colonies. We must attend to the question of their immediate repatriation. This country needs the activities, both mental and bodily, of all her children for the development of our resources to the highest degree in the light of modern science. Then there is the question of labour organization and missions for the elevation of the depressed classes. The country has been hitherto altogether neglecting the vital problem of the amelioration of sections of our countrymen and countrywomen designated as "Criminal tribes" and "Criminal classes." These are all subject to harassing and humiliating special laws.

Congress must appoint Committees for the purpose of starting and co-operating in movements in connection with all these problems. I think the Social Reformers will take care of themselves but the Congress must extend their right hand of sympathy and good fellowship towards them. All these activities should be on a thoroughly organized basis and on a progressive efficient scale.

I also desire that the scheme for the entire renovation of India includes a negative aspect to which I would call your attention specially. With the people of India thus renovated, if not reborn, into a nation, well knit and vital, we have the means of converting not simply the personnel of the bureaucratic government but what is still more important the non-official English exploiters of our country as well into a new angle of vision. With this scheme, we can starve the English planters, the English merchants, traders and manufacturers in our country with increasing scarcity of labour into gradual exhaustion and into satisfactory mentality towards us. And this will also give us power in reserve to produce national strikes of inferior and unskilled workmen in Railways, Posts and Telegraph departments and so forth. Let us remember that the great bible of the Englishmen is the financial code. Financial statistics which show loss of income and which threaten progressive loss of income have far greater effect on the mental outlook and the moral calibre of the average Englishman than any other weapon we can conceive of. I desire that we intentionally and with set purpose make provision for gradually and rapidly affecting the income of the English exploiter in India and even of England in so far as India is her market and supplier of raw produce, in all legitimate ways, immediately by organizing labour, especially unskilled labour, for the economic advancement of India at an accelerated speed and calculated at the same time to starve the foreign exploiter as stated above. The Congress must appoint a select committee of experts with power to form branch committees throughout the country for making suitable arrangements for the gradual boycott of foreign

goods and for stoppage of exportation of raw produce. I consider this is the most effective method of converting Englishmen into our friends at least into a sense of justice for us. Let us not forget that the English exploiters, non-official much more than official, form a sort of moral Ulster in India without a geographical unit. Our first duty therefore is to recognise this fact. We have been too long negligent of this phenomenon in spite of warnings from the days of Lord Ripon. The weakness of the English exploiter not to speak of the whole nation, is money, finance if you like. We must attack him there if we desire to attack him with any success at all. A witty Frenchman once said that the Englishman would rather forgive parricide than the theft of a penny. Let us remember that once upon a time England punished murder with fine while it hanged people for robbery and forgery. Parnell hit the right nail when he, with grim humour, said that in a composite British army of Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Irishmen, the Irish broke the line of the enemy, then came the Scots and took the prisoners, last came the English and picked up the booty. A far greater and more serious authority is also available on the point. Burke says that the English idea of liberty is not abstract but inherent in some sensible object and that almost every nation has some favourite point which is the criterion of their liberty and that the English sensible object with which their idea of freedom is indissolubly connected is money.

I venture to submit to you for your consideration that the scheme which is at once capable of reconstructing and advancing the economic state of the country and paralysing the production, the manufacture, and the sale of goods of Englishmen here and in England and the Colonies is the best weapon we can think of and absolutely free from any disquieting principle calculated to do us the least harm and no Viceroy would have the courage to describe it as unconstitutional. You will observe that the scheme I place before you relates to the gradual boycott of all foreign goods and not merely British goods and this for two reasons. In our plan we should make an

honest endeavour to exclude the play of any feelings of vendetta. On the other hand the mere exclusion of British goods would only swell the import of other foreign goods and therefore would check the promotion of our economic prosperity as effectually as now.

I have also another proposal to submit to you. It has long been the accepted unwritten creed of the Indian National Congress that, in our endeavours to extract from England the full and loyal performance of their duties to India, we should not ally ourselves with any political party in England but should be neutral and apply to all alike. Whatever the wisdom of this course was at the early life of the Congress, I venture to think that the time has now arrived for us to definitely declare ourselves the ally of one party pure or composite and that we should co-operate with that party in their endeavours to increase their power and influence both in the Parliament and outside it. Obviously we cannot think of the Conservatives or of the Unionists as our ally. The choice lies between the Labour Party and and the pure Liberal Party but it is lamentable that on the one hand the pure Liberal Party, apart from individual exceptions, was at no time a warm advocate of our rights and on the other hand does not appear a well-organized and progressive party now. There remains only the Labour Party together with Independent Liberals like Commander Kenworthy. This country is already beholden to them for unalloyed service in our aspirations, thanks to Col. Wedgewood, Mr. Ben Spoor, and others heartily co-operating with them. I have the courage to submit to you for your consideration that our offer will be most welcome to this party. And it is high time that this country offers a hearty alliance to them as well in love and gratitude as in our vital national interests.

You will thus see that the "sanction" behind our demand or the weapon with which we have to carry on our struggle successfully to reach the establishment of responsible Government is three-fold: The reconstruction of the Indian nation on principles sanctioned by the law of God and of utility tested and approved by the wisdom of man in all

free countries, ancient and modern ; the reorganization of our economic industry of the country with the negative provision of starving foreign and English exploitation of our country and also affecting the commercial interests of England in so far as it may be possible for India to do ; and lastly by entering into a cordial alliance with the Labour Party in England. I venture to claim that the programme I have sketched out for your consideration and adoption is at once both end and means and rests on the one hand on durable and progressive principles and is, on the other, charged with no disquieting elements calculated to divide the people of this country into hostile sections and camps with mutual hatred and jealousy, and free too from all tendencies to dangerous reaction and to peril to those engaged in the propaganda work of the movement.

Let us next endeavour to take a bird's-eye view of the whole situation. Let us consider it in its two general aspects and I can conceive of no third aspect that is as fashioned by our bureaucracy and as is now being made by ourselves. Despite pledges and professions to the contrary, the British administration of India has been from the beginning on principles of aggressive non-co-operation of the dominant white people with the coloured people of India ever on discriminatory laws and discriminatory administrative measures supplemented from time to time by the application of very repressive laws unknown to free and civilized countries. The position has become simply intolerable. The last straw has been added to the burden by the Esher Commission Report and we can stand it no longer. At this hour of our supreme crisis it is the sacred and sworn duty of every one of us to raise the level of his vision so that the ways and means which we are bound to devise and adopt for the purpose of rescuing ourselves from this galling and perilous plight are not only suitable and adequate but are also such as we can be ever proud of and as would appeal to the general conscience and general conviction of the tribunal of the civilized world. England can no longer remain an isolated power. If we desire to accuse her at the bar of the world's

tribunal as we do desire in view to our redress and salvation, we ought to enter our protest of complaint and demand of justice with " clean hands and clean minds " in the words of Mahatmaji Gandhi. I would ask you seriously to approach the problem from this standpoint.

Taking the question of the adequacy of our ways and means first I would impress upon you to consider the prime necessity that we are united, not only in making our demand but also in formulting the specific terms of the demand and in our adoption and pursuit of our methods in view to see the demand is granted. I am satisfied and I believe you are satisfied that the country is now unanimous in its demand for the immediate establishment of responsible Government. But unless we are also united and unanimous in our programme to attain it, it is my duty to my God and to my country to say that our chance would fly away, and the vision of our salvation would only move like *ignis fatuus* light approaching and receding and ever deceiving. And we shall be deeply chargeable with rash judgment and criminal neglect of the God-given moment for our salvation, alike at the forum of the great world and of our posterity. United we stand and are saved, divided we fall and perish.

I have called your attention to the features and aspects of the several items of the programme of non-co-operation adopted by the Special Congress at Calcutta. I desire permission to allude to one or two of its important features of a general kind. Whatever the form of a democratic Government, its success as capable of producing the highest freedom and greatest happiness of the people depends upon the fact whether it is a government by discussion or by dictation. Great political writers, Bagehot, for example, lay stress on this feature and maintained that no government, whatever its constitution and however precise and noble its declaration of the fundamental rights of the people, can contribute to the freedom of the people unless it is a government by discussion. There are two principles necessarily implied in carrying out the programme and propaganda work we are now considering without

regimentation and without a very severe discipline of all those who are actively party to it, the propaganda work cannot be carried on and this regimentation out and out necessarily implies an absolute and universal surrender of private judgement and a gradual emasculation of the capacity for it. And national regimentation and national lack and atrophy of power of private judgment, history, ancient and modern, proves to be inconsistent with national freedom and national happiness and progress; if indeed, they are not inconsistent with continued national existence. Sparta and even Athens and Germany and several Latin and latinised states of the old and new world are examples and warnings to us in this vital respect. We all know that ancient Athens was not only free from national regimentation, unlike Sparta but also its citizens possessed and enjoyed the right of private judgment in the highest degree so much so that even an egg-seller on his way home from the market could take part in the discussion of the affairs of the republic. And we all know the dizzy height of freedom and glory which she attained and which has not been since reached by any modern state. But Athens fell too. It is a remarkable fact that her decline and fall dates from the most glorious point in her history, namely the period of Pericles. His brilliant genius and great character was the commencement of the ruin of the state. People adored him and trusted him and declined to judge for themselves and the decay of the faculty of private judgment of individuals began and with it began the national decline and fall. A great historian observes that if Pericles had been less great and less trusted by the people of the republic, Athens had not fallen. And in a short period the general demoralisation of the people of Athens was so great that the great orator Domosthenes who endeavoured, with his divine eloquence, to rally the Athenians to resist Philip of Macedon and to save the republic from conquest and subjection was compelled to warn the Athenians that they should take care that after driving away Philip they did not manufacture a new Philip to take his place. We would do well to take this lesson to heart.

We must take care not to manufacture, by our ways and means, a new bureaucray and tyranny in the place of our chronic bureaucracy and old tyranny. The melancholy fall of Germany is also full of lessons and warnings for us. Next to Athens, she was the freest people of Europe and England is but transplanted and insular Germany. Germany was justly called the fatherland of modern thought but from the time of Bismarck national regimentation in view to reach the greatest predominance in the world, accompanied by the necessary compelling process of securing a surrender and emasculation of private judgment began. With the development and success of this twin process the ancient German instinct for personal freedom decayed and became at the time of the great war almost extinct. These examples are better than authoritative precepts but I might quote Professor Huxley whom I am sure you will all accept as great and conclusive authority in support of my humble contention, how pernicious in every interest national regimentation or regimentation of any considerable section like that of the Salvation Army, is. It is not enough that we establish responsible government but we must also maintain in it the highest and most progressive state of efficiency. Instances there are where such forms of government were voluntarily abandoned. Jamaica threw away the gift of a responsible government after a short trial and Jamaica was once a Colony of Spain, the country of Loyalla. Let us not forget that the making of modern Italy was due less, much less to, Mazzini, the prophetic patriot than to the genius of more worldly patriots, Garibaldi and Cavour. The horrors of Russian Bolshevism are due to the fact that while she has her Mazzini and a more inspiring prophet in Count Tolstoy, she has no Garibaldi or Cavour.

It is worth our while to inquire what our own ancient Indian state was considered from this standpoint. I have already called your attention to the importance universally attached in ancient India to the science of polity as being the highest of sciences. Ancient Hindu state was government by discussion and the villages and the towns

which constituted the country were all quasi-republics and self-contained whose affairs were carried on by open discussion and deliberation by all the people. The King is enjoined to seek counsel for all administrative measures from a group of ministers and never to act alone or take counsel from a single minister. It was left to him to consult them individually or collectively but consult all of them he must and the number of ministers recommended varied from 12 to 20. The judgment of a single person even in judicial matters was repugnant to ancient Hindu genius. In the ancient Hindu judicial system a court never meant a single judge. In this connection Indra was praised because he has one thousand counsellers for consultation and assistance. Hence he was called thousand-eyed and the high degree of importance the ancient Hindu writers attached to government by discussion may be gathered from their precept that the King shall despise the opinion of none, for "even a child's sensible utterance might be found wise." Therefore, the genius for government by discussion is in our inherited blood and it behoves us to see that in seeking responsible government we seek the best form of it, *viz*, government by discussion as being most suitable to our national genius.

Besides the very great evils of regimentation and of surrender of private judgment with the necessary gradual decay of the faculty of private judgment, may I have your permission to allude to another very serious evil without producing which the the propaganda work of the programme of the Calcutta Congress cannot be carried on. We have had the experience of its working these four months. I ask you to think and to say like sworn jurymen whether the propaganda work has not caused and roused dismay, grief, and fierce passions and animosities all round. I do not ask you to say whether the production and existence of this evil has been fully proved but I ask you to apply your mind both to the fact as known by each of you and also as easily ascertained by you and to the further aspect how the system is viewed subjectively by all those

who are conscientiously unwilling to be party to it. We know that bureaucracy in defence of its own pernicious system has been attacking our country as being divided by castes, creeds and races, and as being in consequence unfit for and even incapabls of the exercise of the rights of self-government. It is for you to say whether it is not our religious duty that while we are grateful to God and proud of the new and growing union between the Muslims and the Non-Muslims of this country we do not create two new classes sharply divided on the doctrine of non-co-operation and divided too, in consequence with fierce passions and animosities. The great national advantage we are gaining by the sacred union of the Muslims and the Hindus would be more than neutralised by this huge new danger arising from new frontiers not erected and fomented by the bureaucracy but by ourselves, however conscientiously. Apart from our experience of the actual working of this movement, historic evidence tells us that a movement of this kind is fraught with domestic danger though the nature and extent of it may be contrary to the intention of the saintly leader of it. Domestic boycott and that of a very fierce kind is a necessary concomitant of the propaganda work. I would allude to one parallel circumstance of it in Ireland, namely, the treatment accorded to tenants who were bidders for farms from which other tenants had been evicted. At a public meeting several voices cried, as regards one such bidder "Shoot him." Parnell, who was present at it proposed a "more Christian and charitable way" and this "Christian and charitable way" was that this poor wretch must be shunned by everybody on the roadside, in the streets of the town, in the shop, in the market place, and even in the place of worship, in short that he should be isolated from the rest of this country "as if he were the leper of old." It is for you to consider in fear of God and love of justice and of our country whether such things are not also calculated to arise in the carrying out of the particular propaganda before us. Many thinkers even among those who are for abandoning the old method of petitioning Government here and in England for redress

of our national grievances and who are for adopting an effectual national weapon to force the hands of our rulers to comply with the national demands at once are afraid, are genuinely afraid, that the success of the working of the particular propaganda would be erecting the whole of India outside the area of non-co-operation into a strange moral Coventry.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I must not indent on your kind indulgence any further and I must bring my observations to a close. There are several other points of considerable importance to which I might like to call your attention, but I do not think it is so very necessary as to compel me to tax your patience any longer. The programme before us includes the question of the revision of the Constitution of the Congress. The most important part of it is what is known as the creed. In dealing with this point I would appeal to you earnestly to consider that the question is not what the form and spirit of the creed should be if we are called upon to adopt one for the first time, but why and how we should change the existing one. I venture to submit that the two questions are not identical. If we desire a change, the reason and the superior advantage of the change should be clear to us before we consent to the change. I would only say one word about it. Throughout my earnest appeal to you to-day I proceeded on the basis that British India is part of the British Empire and that the renovated and free British India is to be part of and partner with England. I desire our freedom and our prosperity and our right place in the family of great nations not less fervently than any in this great presence. But dispassionate reason and inspiring precedent have ever sustained me in my irresistible life long conviction that the independence of India in partnership with England would be in every way and in every interest by far greater than her independence in absolute separation from her and in isolation. I desire to call your attention that Japan saved her threatened freedom and achieved her greatness and glory with England as her treaty ally at her supreme moment. And

I believe that the advantages would be far greater if our alliance is full life partnership than qualified term partnership. I will next call your attention to the principles and attitude of the great Irish patriots till recently. Both Henry Grattan and Isaac Butt, the apostles of Irish Home-Rule, desired the home rule without separation from England. Said Issac Butt: "Ireland has given up the idea of separation because she has before her the prospect of obtaining another and a far better thing." Some seven decades before him, Henry Grattan had said: "She hears the ocean protesting against separation, but she hears the sea likewise protesting against Union; she follows, therefore, her physical destination, and obeys the dispensations of Providence, when she protests, like that sea, against the two situations, both equally unnatural, Separation and Union." These words of supreme wisdom are most suitable for our adoption under the dispensations of Providence. If Ireland hes now changed her intention and plan it is because the legitimate measure of home rule she so long cried and prayed for was most unwisely refused to her at the right moment as practically confessed by the present Prime Minister. But the circumstances and conditions of the two countries are by no means exactly the same. Her extreme nearness to Great Britain so much so that she is deemed essentially and vitally a part of the Island State seems to be in the way of her getting the full dominion Home-Rule. But while our grievances are far more substantial and much larger in measure than the grievances of Ireland, our great distance from England not to mention the fact that the peoples of the two countries are not the same in blood, religion and colour makes an enormous difference. It may be that the Unionists desire Ireland to be as much part of the British Isles as Abraham Lincoln thought that the Southern States of the United States should remain an integral part of the whole country On the whole, I confess that I am unable to understand the full scope and the exact nature of the issue between England and Ireland. I would, therefore, deprecate all attempts on our part to model our aims and plans on those

of Ireland. At least in our case the question is *chose jugee.* Responsible government has been pledged and promised to us; though we know from past experience what authoritative English pledges and promises to us have been hitherto, yet we need not despair; any further edition and interpretation by England of this pledge and of her part of the original compact with us generally, will be safeguarded by ourselves soundly organized and ever acting in the right spirit.

I would now conclude and in doing so I would make an earnest appeal to you and beg of you to realise that, for the past two years, we have been in an increasingly critical state of our life, polical and economical. I believe that the crisis has now reached its worst and the Nagpur session of the Congress may be rightly deemed to be the Thermopylae in the history of India, certainly in the history of the Indian National Congress. I believe that it has been alloted to this great presence so to think, so to aim, and so to act as to reap the glory of the nation-making and history-making of our beloved Motherland. In one aspect the work before us consists of two essential parts: one positive and the other negative. I venture to think that our fate just now lies chiefly in the hands of two men: the Right Hon'ble Mr. Montagu and Mahatmaji Gandhi. Two messages have to be presently framed, one to each. You will frame the message to Mr. Montagu and by virtue of the confidence you have reposed in me I shall frame the message to Mahatmaji. You will tell Mr. Montagu: "Pray do" and I will tell the Mahatmaji "Pray do not" and in the welcome response to each message lies the salvation of our country in the main just now. The Congress has to tell the Coalition Ministry that at the end of the War it was a great pity that they did not act towards us like Abraham Lincoln at the end of the great Civil War. At the end of that War, he was pressed and cajoled and tempted in every way to return the black warriors, with whose help he gained the war of succession and firmly established the union of the country, to their pre-war masters. But his heart

rebelled, yes, the heart of him who was one of the greatest, if not the greatest of the world's emancipators and saviours of man from man and he courageously declined to countenance the ignoble and malignant suggestion. But the Coalition Government fell an easy victim to their own pre-war mentality revised by success and to the conspiracies and temptations to the strain of which they were subjected in respect to these three great questions affecting the vital existence of the people of this country, namely, the immediate establishment of responsible government, the pledges to our Mussulman brethren in the matter of the Khilafat jurisdiction of the Sultan of Turkey and in the matter of the treatment of the Indians in the British Colonies by themselves made and by themselves saved in this great war at least to a far greater extent than by the white subjects of His Gracious Mojesty. We have to tell them that the opportunity is not wholly lost and that it is not too late. Some of our warm European friends advocate the demand of a short time limit for the establishment of responsible government. But I venture to think that the proposal cannot recommend itself to us. Without immediate financial independence we cannot live one year longer, without precipitating ourselves deeper and deeper into irretrievable economic exhaustion. On the other hand absolutely no reason and no pretext even can be thought of as justification or excuse for any further delay in rendering this elementary justice to us. Possibly, the suggestion was made under a mistaken view of the obstacles thrown in our way by the preamble and the provision for time limit in the Government of India Act. But I have already placed before you the view which I believe is beyond controversy and is justified by precedents in the Colonial History of England that the establishment of responsible government can be achieved and can be immediately begun by Mr. Montagu, under the auspices of His Gracious Majesty if not even by private instructions from himself alone. We have to tell him and I have to tell the Mahatmaji that in the processes of the state-making and nation-building for India, the great political maxim

enunciated by Burke should ever be remembered by them, namely: "Bodies tied together by so unnatural a bond of union as mutual hatred, are only connected to their ruin." On our part I would earnestly appeal to you that it is of no use any further to think and call for punishments on those who have heaped unparalleled disaster and humiliation upon us in connection with what is now historically known as the Punjab Tragedy. Let us forgive all, anywise concerned with it. But pray let us not forget the frightful business in all its horrors. No man and no nation can wisely walk forward in the path of progress if they are not proud of their past glory and if they do not live in vivid memory of their past errors and misfortunes caused by man. We must make our future and hasten it too, to begin with, in the light of our past and our past within these few years and even within these few months. But no feelings of hatred or vendetta should be permitted to taint our principles or plans. Not only our intense love of our motherland is not inconsistent with our forgiveness of England in spite of the continued provocation but on the other hand it is most productive of culture in combination with international love. What President Poincare says of France is true of us: "Patriotism does not come into conflict with our duties toward humanity; it is on the contrary a necessary condition of those duties", namely duties to ourselves. There is also the great question of justice to the people of England as a whole. We must remember the historic saying of Burke that it is impossible to frame an indictment against a whole nation. And there is the assurance, if assurance is needed, of our warm and distinguished friend, Col. Wedgewood, that nine-tenths of the people of England are innocent of any kind of connection and countenance of the deeds of men responsible for the frightful horrors of the Punjab. If then we ordain the new nation of India without feelings of hatred and without feelings of vendetta, externally and with fraternity and love internally, I believe we can compel the Coalition Government and the one-tenth of the people of England at once to confess their sins and to admit the imperious justice of our claim for immediate responsible government and for

full power to collect and appropriate our own taxes and revenue. If unwisely they postpone our lawful and earnest prayers for elementary justice then the millions of this country will soon know the reason why. But to do that effectively on our part we must be united alike in aim and method. Here also examples of historic wisdom should alone guide us rather than any *a priori* view or alluring prophetic vision. Abraham Lincoln during all the vicissitudes of the Civil War, for which he was responsible in view to emancipation of the negro slaves, declared that he attached far greater importance to the unity of the country and that if he was put to a choice only between his two aims, American Unity and Negro Emancipation, he would certainly abandon the problem of emancipation partially or even wholly in view to national integrity and union. If we are united, we can then tell England and only then and not till then that the 300 millions of India organized and united despise Irish methods and Hungarian plans for freedom but that we shall achieve our own salvation in imitation of far greater and far happier nations such as France and Italy and that if ever in our struggle for freedom methods of Sinn Feinnism should enter and poison the processes it would be by England against India and not by India against England. She already began Sinn Feinnism in the Punjab last year and the frightful horrors she committed there were more frightful than the horrors, actual and reported, of the Sinn Feinns in Ireland. We would remind them too that revolutionary France "bare-footed, bare-backed, with only bread and steel," was able to crush Europe in defence of the newly discovered rights of man and Frenchman. Because in the words of Carlyle : "The nation has that within her which the whole world will not conquer." India re-born and united and speaking as one man with her banner with the new motto not of liberty and equality only but also of fraternity inscribed on it fluttering in every wind of heaven, can tell England: "We also belong to the species homo. We were the first and the foremost of it and we mean to be one of the foremost if not the foremost of it again; no more pin your faith in the political

gospel of "the man on the spot" kind. Don't be stupid any more, either now, or it would be too late; remember that there are some everywhere in India with admiration and love to England, the greater Athens of the modern world, not inferior to the romantic devotion of Lord Byron to ancient Athens and that the fact of rapid success of the movement of non-co-operation and the universal desire for a sanction other than rebellion to secure our rights shews conclusively the firm loyalty of the people and that it would be unparalleled folly and atrocious and suicidal folly to attempt to keep us by coercion under plausible and captivating camouflage such as goal of responsible Government representation and a voice in the League of Nations and Empire's Conference. In one word "be a good boy and be partner with us or get thee gone." And this too without a Cromwell and without shedding a drop of blood.

VANDE MATARAM

HAKIM AJMAL KHAN*

BROTHER AND SISTER DELEGATES, Ladies and Gentlemen,—For the first time in the history of the Indian National Congress we are assembling under circumstances when, as a result of the latest measures of the British Government in India, our duly elected President is not amongst us. It is a matter of deepest regret to all of us that Mr. C. R. Das is not with us to guide our deliberations to-day. It is superfluous for me to enumerate the numerous national services of that great partiot from Bengal or refer to the prominent place he occupies in the political and social life of our country, when the nation has itself unequivocally said in what esteem it holds him by conferring on him the greatest honor in its power. But while we regret his absence on that account, it should be a matter of deepest satisfaction to us all, both because the man whom the nation had chosen as its chief representative has, by his undaunted courage, splendid self-sacrifice and spirit of cheerful suffering, proved himself worthy of the great honour conferred on him and because his arrest brings us a stage nearer to our success. Mr. C. R. Das has done greater service to his country by his arrest than he would probably have done by presiding over our deliberations to-day. His arrest has infused greater spirit and determination into the hearts of national workers and galvanised the entire country to greater activities and sacrifices.

I, however, realise my own inability to fill the place of Mr. C. R. Das, and while thanking you for the great trust you have reposed in me by electing me to act for him, I hope

* Hakim Ajmal Khan, the Acting President, in the absence of Mr. C. R. Das in prison, delivered his address in Urdu. This English version was read by Mr. Shuaib Qureshi.

and trust that I will prove myself worthy of the great honour you have conferred on me not only in this Pandal but when the time comes for me to make, for my country and my God, the sacrifice that it has been the good fortune of many of our noble brethren to make.

Brother and Sister Delegates, I am not going to deliver a lengthy speech first because the time at my disposal is short and in the second place I feel that the time for long speeches is gone. We all are called upon to solve the most serious problem in the history of our country and the present is the time for decision and action. It will take a long time to enter upon a detailed survey of the progress of the non-co-operation movement since the last Session of the Indian National Congress. I will only briefly touch on the advance the country has made since the inauguration of non-violent non-co-operation. The spirit of non-co-operation pervades throughout the country and there is no true Indian heart even in the remotest corner of this great country which is not filled with the spirit of cheerful suffering and sacrifice to attain Swaraj and see the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs redressed. It has received the highest tribute that a nation could pay to another from our sister nations across the Indian Ocean. Our Egyptian brethren have adopted it to fight their own political battle. It should be a matter of pride to all of us that India is showing the way to other sister countries. Non-violent non-co-operation has ceased to be an Indian movement. It is fast becoming an Asiatic movement and the day is not distant when the conscience of the world will adopt non-violent non-co-operation as the world-weapon against universal injustice and untruth. Who can deny the success of the spirit of the non-co-operation movement in India after witnessing the cheerful spirit with which our workers have made and are making willing sacrifices for the cause of their country and are going to jail in ever increasing numbers with a smile on their lips ? What is still more is that not even this intense repression has provoked violence. It has only redoubled the national determination. Every successive fit of repression on the part of the Government

whether it was in connection with the confiscation of the Fatwa of Jamiat-Ul-Ulema, the famous Karachi Trial or the wholesale application of the Seditious Meetings Act, the Criminal Law Amendment Act or Section 144 of the Cr. P. Code by means of which the right of association and peaceful activities of the volunteer organisations, together with other elementary rights of citizenship, were suppressed had had but one effect, *viz.*, the determination on the part of the people to continue the national activities and persist in their demand. A ceaseless pilgrimage to the jail is kept up in vindication of the primary rights of citizenship in all the northern parts of India as also in Maharashtra and Andhra. The nation to-day realizes the grimness and gravity of the great strugggle it is engaged in and is behaving with the cool determination worthy of heroes fighting for a noble cause.

Nor is the time at which we are waging this noble struggle inopportune. Not only the conscience of Asia and Africa is awake and active but there are signs, feeble no doubt, yet full of hope and promise, that the conscience of Europe too is at last rousing itself from its long slumber.

I must add one word about the visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. We have no quarrel with His Royal Highness ; but we do not want a bankrupt Government to re-establish its fallen political credit by making a capital out of His Royal Highness's visit. Nor is the country in a mood to accord the Prince a cordial welcome so long as the two sores of the Khilafat and the Punjab are still running and Swaraj is still unattained. We therefore resolved simply to refrain from taking part in the welcome to His Royal Highness. And if there have been any regrettable incidents with consequent bitterness of spirit, the responsibility for them lies entirely at the doors of the Government that betrayed such a lamentable lack of sense and judgment and acted in a manner utterly unjustifiable.

Our critics say that the non-co-operation movement has failed and in support of that statement point to the

Government educational institutions, the ranks of the title-holders, the members of the new Legislative Councils and the Bars of the various High Courts. My answer to that, if answer be still needed after what I have just said, is that so far as the Government educational institutions are concerned, I would invite the attention of our critics to what the Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University had to say on the effect of the non-co-operation movement. That result was achieved in spite of the fact that we had not made provision for a sufficient number of national colleges and national schools and for the students who left their institutions. As to the title-holders and members of the Legislative Councils—the classes which would naturally not be the first to respond to such an appeal—what is their position? Where is their prestige to-day? It has fallen lower than Czarist ruble. The Government may still manufacture and place them in the market but the public simply does not care for them and after all it is the public alone that can give them the position of trust and honour that is claimed for them. As to the lawyers, it is true that with some noble exceptions they have not as a class, responded to our appeal as they ought to have done. But as we develop our Panchayat system, a work to which we have not been able to devote much of our time and energy, the legal practitioners would soon fall in with public opinion. The question of Government servants is slightly different, and comparing the number of resignations offered last month with the average for the previous months, we have no reason to feel dissatisfied with the progress that non-co-operation is making in that direction, specially as the increased number of resignations is unquestionably the result of the policy of intensive repression adopted by the Government.

True, there are some of our Moderate brothers with genuine love of our common country in their hearts who, for want of true appreciation of the real nature of the struggle we are engaged in and the issues that it involves, have not yet taken their proper place in the national ranks. But I feel sure that if the fire of patriotism is still

alive in their hearts, and I feel confident that it will not die, they will soon realize their mistake and will be found taking the place of their brothers whose names figure on the National Roll of Honour.

I cannot close without referring to the tragic events that are daily taking place in Malabar and the prolonged agonies of our unfortunate Moplah brethren. And here I must make it quite clear that this question has two aspects : one with reference to the Government in the country and the other with reference to the treatment by the Moplahs of their Hindu brethren. As to the first, judging from the evidence before the public, one cannot help coming to the conclusion that the responsibility of provoking these disturbances rests entirely on the shoulders of the Government. While as to the method adopted in suppressing these, there will be no thinking person in the country who will not condemn them. All of us who have had the experience of Amritsar know the horrible nature of this "pacification". It was only accidently that the terrible train-tragedy was revealed to the public the other day. But how many other tragedies there are that have not come to light ?

As to our Hindu brethren who have been forcibly converted or have otherwise suffered at the hands of some of the Moplahs, I fully sympathise with them and there will be no Muslim worthy of the name who will not condemn this entirely un-Islamic act in the strongest possible terms. I feel sure that these stray incidents are the acts of a few misguided individuals and that the rest of the Moplahs are as ready and strong in condemning them as any of us here. Still I should not like the fair name of Islam to be tarnished in the slightest degree and I sincerely regret these deplorable incidents.

Ladies and Gentlemen, our country is experiencing terrible convulsions but it requires no prophet to foretell that these are the birth-pangs of young India that will revive the glorious traditions of our ancient country and take its proud place by the nations of the world. (*Loud applause*).

DESHABANDHU'S UNDELIVERED ADDRESS *

MR. CHAIRMAN of the Reception Committee and Delegates of the Indian National Congress,—We have arrived at a critical stage in our struggle with the bureaucracy; and it behoves us, every one of us, to search our hearts and to ask ourselves the question: "Do I stand for India in her present struggle?" It is because I stand for India that I have responded to your unanimous call to-day. I thank you for your confidence in me; but I warn you that I have no worldly wisdom to offer you. I come from a city which has felt the full force of the wrath of the Government. Measures for stifling political life have been taken, as I believe, in order to coerce the people to receive His Royal Highness the

* This is the full text of Deshabandhu Das's Presidential Address with a prefatory note by Mahatma Gandhi, as published in *Young India* of 12th January 1922. Gandhiji's note runs:

"I must apologise to the public for the delay in issuing Deshabandhu Das's presidential address. It was received by me in a fragmentary condition with instructions to revise it and put it in shape. The reader will be glad to learn that beyond restoring one sentence which had been ruled out and adding one to complete a thought and beyond slight verbal immaterial alterations, the address is being printed as received. I see from the sentences ruled out in the original that Deshabandhu's intention was to give a review of the year's work and his considered opinion in detail on non-co-operation. But sufficient appears in the printed text to enable us to know his opinion. We know it too from his emphatic and stirring messages to the country just before he was sentenced. In appreciating the address the reader will be helped to know that it was prepared just before his arrest. The reader will not fail to note the marked self-restraint with which the address is prepared as also the fact that Deshabandhu believes in non-violence as his final creed. That the only use the Government has for such a man is to put him in prison is about the greatest condemnation it can pronounce upon itself."

Prince of Wales; but it is the imprisoned soul of Calcutta that will greet His Royal Highness on the 24th December. I come from the struggle which has just begun in Calcutta, chastened and purified; and, if I have no wisdom to give, I at least bring before you unbounded enthusiasm, and a resolute determination to see this struggle through.

I think that at the very outset we ought to define our attitude in relation to the present struggle. What is our aim? Whither are we going? I think that most people will agree that we are out to secure freedom, freedom from foreign subjection, freedom from foreign interference. It is as well, however, that we should have a clear grasp of what is meant by the word "Freedom." In the first place it does not imply absence of all restraint. When I am forbidden to steal my neighbour's purse or to trespass on my neighbour's land, there is necessarily a restraint on my action: but there is no opposition between freedom and such restraint as has the sanction of the people behind it. In the second place, freedom does not necessarily imply absence of the idea of dependence. Dependence there must be so long as we live in society, and need the protection of society; and there is no necessary opposition between freedom and such dependence as is willingly suffered by the people. But though there is no necessary opposition between freedom and restraint, and freedom and dependence, it must be remembered that restraint that does not deny freedom can only be such restraint as has the sanction of the people behind it; and dependence consistent with freedom can only be such dependence as is willingly suffered by the people for its own protection.

What then is freedom? It is impossible to define the term; but one may describe it as that state, that condition, which makes it possible for a nation to realise its own individuality and to evolve its own destiny. The history of mankind is full of stirring stories as to how nations have struck for freedom in order to keep their nationalism and their individuality inviolate and untarnished. To take only modern instances, one may refer to Finland and Poland,

Ireland, Egypt and India. Each of these nations has offered a determined resistance to the imposition of a foreign culture upon it. The history of these nations has run on parallel lines. First, there is the protest against cultural conquest; secondly, there is the desire for national education; and lastly, there is the demand for its recognition as a separate organism with the power to work out its own destiny without any hindrance from any foreign power.

We stand then for freedom, because we claim the right to develop our own individuality and evolve our own destiny along our own lines, unembarrassed by what Western civilization has to teach us and unhampered by the institutions which the West has imposed on us. But here a voice interrupts me, the voice of Rabindranath, the poet of India. He says: "The Western culture is standing at our door; must we be so inhospitable as to turn it away, or ought we not to acknowledge that in the union of the cultures of the East and the West is the salvation of the world?" I admit that if Indian nationalism has to live, it cannot afford to isolate itself from other nations. But I have two observations to make to the criticism of Rabindranath; first we must have a house of our own before we can receive a guest; and secondly, Indian culture must discover itself before it can be ready to assimilate Western culture. In my opinion, there can be no true assimilation before freedom comes, although there may be, as there has been, a slavish imitation. The cultural conquest of India is all but complete; it was the inevitable result of her political conquest. India must resist it. She must vibrate with national life; and then we may talk of the union of the two civilizations.

I must dispose of another objection, this time of my Moderate friends. "You concede," I hear them say, "that freedom is not an end in itself, but a means to an end, the end being self-realisation, self-dependence, self-control; why not work out your destiny within the British Empire?" My answer is that so long as India occupies the position of a dependent in the British Empire, so long

the task cannot be undertaken. Go into the villages, the heart of India and see the life that is lived by the average Indian. They are sturdy and fearless men; they are men of whom any country would be proud; but the degradation, that must inevitably follow subjection, is writ large on their brow, and their lot is made up of caste troubles, petty squabbles and endless pusuit of litigation for litigation's sake. Where are now the institutions that made them self-dependent and self-contained? Where is the life that enabled them to earn their livelihood and yet left them free to worship the God of their father? I assert that once a nation passes into subjection, degeneration must inevitably set in, attacking the very life-blood of that nation. Its effect is to be seen not in this sphere or that sphere but in every sphere of the nation's activity. Economically, the British rule has had a disastrous effect on our national well-being. Mr. R. C. Dutt and after him Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya has shown how deliberately the destruction of our national industry, the spinning and weaving industry, was planned. Who can contemplate with equanimity that every year many crores of rupees go out of India without corresponding advantage? Morally, we are becoming a nation of slaves, and have acquired most vices of the slave. We speak the language of the master, and ape his manners; and we rush with alacrity to adopt his institutions while our own institutions lie languishing in the villages. Intellectually we have become willing victims to the imposition of a foreign culture on us; and the humiliation is complete when we are deliberately breaking away from the past, recognising no virtue in its continuity. "But then," say my Moderate friends: "How can you hope to win freedom until you have elevated the people?" If I am right in my diagnosis that the present condition of India, material, moral and intellectual is the direct result of the foreign rule in India, then it must follow that so long as our subjection continues, so long there is no hope of recovery. You may of course tackle side problems, as we are trying to do. You infuse such enthusiasm amongst the people as may be of great assistance to you in your political campaigns. But, believe

me, it is the disease that you must fight, and not the outward symptoms of the disease.

I object then to the perpetuation of British domination as in my opinion it is impossible to find the fulfilment of our nationality, our individuality, our personality, so long as that domination continues. In arriving at this conclusion I have entirely ignored the character of the British rule in India. That rule may be good or bad, it may be conceded that it is partly good and partly bad, but my conclusion is based on the view that there is inherent in subjection something which injures national life and hampers its growth and self-fulfilment. Whether within the Empire or outside it, India must have freedom so that she may realise her individuality and evolve her destiny without help or hindrance from the British people.

I now come to the question—what are the methods which we ought to adopt in our fight with the bureaucracy? There are three, and only three methods that I know of: (1) armed resistance, (2) co-operation with the bureaucracy in the Councils that have been established under the Government of India Act, and (3) non-violent non-co-operation. The first I must dimiss as beyond the range of practical politics. Even if it were not so, on principle I am opposed to violence. We must then choose between co-operation and non-co-operation.

I confess, that in considering the question of co-operation, I am not a little troubled by the fact that some of our leaders who assisted at the birth of political life in India are ranged against us on the question. I therefore propose to consider some of the arguments that are advanced against us by these supporters of the Government of India Act; and in doing so, I shall consider first whether the freedom of the Indian nation, that is to say, its right to develop its own individuality and evolve its own destiny has been recognised in the Act; secondly, whether the Act either expressly or by necessary implication gives even the beginnings of responsible government to the

Indian people; and lastly, whether the legislature has any control, effective or otherwise, over the purse.

Now the Preamble of the Act is the key to the situation. "Whereas it is the declared policy of Parliament," so the Preamble runs. What is the declared policy of Parliament? To recognise the inherent right of the Indians to responsible government? Not at all. To recognise the inherent right of India to be treated as a free and equal partner of the commonwealth of nations known as the British Empire? Not at all. But, mark the timid concession to the rights of India: "To provide for the increasing association of Indians in every branch of Indian administration and for the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in British India as an integral part of the Empire." I do not think a more halting concession could ever be made to the rights of a people. Now, is there anything in the Preamble to compel the British Parliament to recognise India, at any time, as a free and equal partner of the British Empire? I think not. "Progressive realization of responsible government in British India"! These are vague words, and they will not, at any time, tax the ingenuity of a British statesman. Omitting the second paragraph and coming to the third, we find: "that the time and manner of each advance can be determined only by Parliament upon whom responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples." Mark the word "peoples", not "people" an assertion by the Parliament that India is not one, but many. I, for one, am not prepared to submit to the insult offered to India in the third paragraph of the Preamble, and I feel bound to protest against it. We are quite prepared to undertake the responsibility for the welfare and advancement of the Indian people (not peoples), and I altogether deny that a foreign Parliament can possibly discharge its responsibilities in relation to a subject nation. I resent the doctrine that the Parliament is to determine the time and manner of each advance, and I say that the whole object of the legislation,

as disclosed in the third paragraph of the Preamble, is to perpetuate the domination of the British Parliament, which I cannot for a moment accept. The fourth paragraph holds out a distinct threat: "And whereas the action of Parliament," so it says, "in such matters must be guided by the co-operation received from those on whom new opportunities of service will be conferred, and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility." In other words, if we are good boys, and if we satisfy the British Parliament that we have a sense of responsibility, then the British Parliament will consider whether we ought not to have a further instalment of reforms. In other words, we are perpetual infants, and the British Parliament is our sole guardian.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have very great respect for the opinion of my political opponents, but I cannot accept the fundamental principle on which the Reform Act is based. I think that we should preserve our self-esteem, whatever the stage of our progress may be. I think that we should solemnly declare in open Cogress, that freedom is inherent in every nation and that India has and possesses the right to develop her own individuality and to evolve her own destiny unhampered by what the British Parliament has decided or may decide for us. I think we should recognise that any power that in any way hampers or embarrasses the self-realization and self-fulfilment of the Indian nation is an enemy of India and must as such be resisted. I am willing to co-operate with England, but on one condition only, that she recognises this inherent right of India. That recognition you will not find anywhere in the Government of India Act, and I for one will not be a party to the perpetuation of British domination in India. But my Moderate friends tell me, that though the freedom of the Indian people, in the sense in which I understand the term, has not been recognised in the Act of Parliament, still, if we work the reforms, it will not be in the power of Parliament to withhold that freedom. I do not doubt the wisdom of my friends nor deny their patriotism; but the question, in my

opinion, is entirely irrelevant. My position is this, that however willing I may be to enter into a compromise with the English Government in matters of detail, and I am willing to make great sacrifices, I will not enter into any compromise on the question which I hold to be fundamental. Freedom is my birthright, and I demand a recognition of that right, not by instalments nor in compartments, but whole and entire. I do not doubt that victory will be on our side; but supposing we fail, we would at least have preserved inviolate our national self-respect and dignity, we would at any rate have repudiated the insult on which the Government of India Act is based. The difference between the Indian National Congress and the Ministers who are working the Reforms Act seems to be fundamental, in that the former has its eye fixed on the ultimate and would reject as essentially false anything that does not recognise the freedom of the Indian people, whereas the latter have their eyes fixed on the departments of which they are in charge, and hope to attain freedom through the successful working of those departments.

I will now consider whether the Act gives even the beginnings of responsible government to India, and whether the Legislature has any control over the purse. The two questions must be considered together. It is the view of the Moderates in Bengal that out of seven members of the Bengal Government, five are Indians. The view is entirely erroneous, I think I am right in saying that provinces are governed, in relation to reserved subjects, by the Governor-in-Council, and in relation to transferred subjects, by the Governor, acting with Ministers. The statute makes no provision whatever for the joint deliberation by the Governor and his Council and his Ministers sitting together, except in regard to proposals for taxation and borrowing, and the framing of proposals for expenditure of public money. In regard to the reserved subjects and these are subjects which are of vital importance to us as a nation in our struggle for political liberty, the Ministers have no voice whatever. I think I am right in saying that they are the dumb spectators of the fight that is now going on between

us and the Government. They are not part of the Government to consider whether, in relation to the non-co-operation movement, a repressive policy should or should not be initiated in the country. Their advice will not be sought when the Local Government has to consider the question whether Mahatma Gandhi ought or ought not to be arrested. If I am right in my view as to the position of the Ministers in relation to reserved subjects, then I suggest to my Moderate friends that they are under an entire misapprehension when they say, that majority of the members of the Government are Indians. The truth is, that in relation to the reserved subjects, the Indian element is in a minority and cannot affect the policy of the Government in the slightest degree, provided the Governor and the English members of the Council combine against it.

I have now to consider the position of the Ministers and the relation between the Ministers and the Legislature in regard to the transferred subjects. My first point is, that it is a mistake to suppose that any 'subject' has been transferred to the Minister. I concede that certain departments have been transferred, but I maintain that they have been transferred subject to the encumbrances created by a century of bureaucratic rule, and the Ministers have no power whatever to discharge those encumbrances. I will at once make my meaning clear. Now medical administration is an important department of the State; and so is public health. These departments, I understood, have been transferred to the Ministers, and the Minister, provided he has complete control of the "subject," is in a position to confer a lasting benefit on the community. But what is the position? The Minister has no effective control over the officers who run these departments, and no voice whatever in the selection of his own officers. It is a peculiar circumstance in the history of the bureaucratic rule in India that whenever the people have cried for something essential to their existence, the Government has given them expensive administration, expensive offices and

expensive buildings instead. The test whether the "subject" has been transferred to the Minister is this: Is the Minister for health under the law in a position to take up this attitude, "I will recast the whole system under which these departments have hitherto been administered. I will abolish the Indian Medical Service, and employ local agencies who would know how to disinfect a well and what steps to take in the case of an epidemic. I will then have more money to spend on the needs of the people"? But no! This attitude the Act denies to him, and yet it is said that the subject has been transferred to him. One of the Ministers in India described his position in bitter terms in the course of a Council debate. He complained that if he applied to the Medical department or the Sanitary department for doctors to meet an emergency, they said to him in reply: "We have no doctors." If he took the responsibility of sending doctors to the affected area, the Medical department said to him: "We do not recognise your doctors, and you must pay them out of your own pocket." When I point out to you that the Minister in question is the Minister in charge of the Medical department and Sanitary department, you will grasp the full significance of the "transfer of subjects" that has taken place under the Act. Well might a Minister exclaim, as one actually did: "Silver and gold have I none, but of such as I have I give unto thee," that is, sympathy. He added that he could only give sympathy, because the purse was held by somebody else, that is to say, the finance member.

This brings me to a question of great importance, and that is whether the Legislature has any control over the purse. The Moderates maintain the affirmative of the proposition; I maintain the negative. I shall presently refer to the provisions of the Act to support my position; but I have a witness of undoubted position and respectability in my favour, whose evidence I should like to place before you. In the course of the general discussion on the budget in one of the Councils, a Minister said as follows: "The two poor men who have been put down here as Ministers

are presumed to be clothed with all the powers of Ministers in the House of Commons, and therefore they are called upon to account for everything for which perhaps a Minister in the House of Commons is responsible . . The Minister here begins his life by getting a dole of money that is given by those who are in charge of the whole administration." The question is whether the Moderates are right or the Minister in question is right. Both may be wrong; but both cannot be right.

Under the rules framed under the Government of India Act, the framing of proposals for expenditure in regard to transferred and reserved subjects is a matter of agreement between the Members of the Executive Council and the Ministers; but if they do not agree as to the apportionment of funds between reserved and transferred departments respectively, the Governor has the power to allocate the revenue and balances of the province between reserved and transferred subjects by specifying the fractional proportions of the revenues and balances which shall be assigned to each class of 'subject'. What, then, is the position? The Moderates proudly assert that the majority of members of the Government are Indians. If that were so, one would expect the question of appointment to be decided in accordance with the view of the majority; but that is not done, because the entire scheme is based on the distrust of the Ministers. We have therefore this result that if the Members and the Ministers are unable to come to an agreement, the matter is decided by the Governor who may act either in accordance with his own discretion or in accordance with the report of an authority to be appointed by the Governor-General in his behalf on the application of the Governor.

That is the impossible position in which the Minister is placed by the scheme framed under the Act; but what is the position of the Council? Has it any power to say: "We require the funds to be apportioned in the way we suggest and not according to the proposal made by the Government?" Can it say: "We require you to spend so

much to fight malaria or so much for primary education ?" The Act undoubtedly gives power to the Council to refuse its assent to a demand or to reduce the amount therein referred to either by a reduction of the whole grant or by the omission or reduction of any of the items of expenditure of which the grant is composed, but this is subject to an important proviso, *viz.*, that the local Government shall have power, in relation to any such demand, to act as if it had been assented to, notwithstanding the withholding of such assent or the reduction of the amount therein referred to, if the demand relates to a reserved subject, and the Governor certifies that the expenditure provided for by the demand is essential to the discharge of his responsibility for the subject. This, according to the Moderates, is the effective control which the Legislature has over the purse. It has no power whatever to say in what proportion the revenue of the country should be allocated between reserved and transferred departments respectively ; it has no control whatever over the revenue allocated to the reserved subjects. All that it can do is to say to the Ministers : "We refuse our assent to your demand" or, "we reduce the amount referred to in your demand either by a reduction of the whole grant or by the omission or reduction of any of the items of expenditure of which the grant is composed." It is ridiculous to describe the limited control exercisable by the Council in relation to the transferred subjects as "an effective control over the purse."

In administrative matters, the position of the Minister is no better. The Act provides that in relation to transferred subjects, the Governor shall be guided by the advice of his Ministers, unless he sees sufficient cause to dissent from their opinion, in which case he may require action to be taken otherwise than in accordance with that advice. In a dispute between the Minister in charge of the department of health and his officer on a question of policy, it is possible for the Governor to support the officer against the Minister. In matters of legislation in relation to the transferred subjects, there is in theory some power in the Legislature, but in practice the finance department,

controlled by a member of the Executive Council, would have the last word on the subject, for I can conceive of no legislation which does not involve expenditure of money, and it is the duty of the finance department (of which, be it remembered, the Minister is not a Member) to examine and advise on the scheme of the new expenditure for which it is proposed to make provision in the estimates.

In regard to the whole scheme, it is legitimate to ask : "Does it secure even the elementary rights which every citizen under any civilised Government possesses ? Is repressive legislation impossible under the Act, except with the consent of the people ? Does it give to the people the right to repeal the repressive legislation which disgraces the Statute-book in India ? Has a repetition of the Punjab atrocities been made impossible ?" I think I am right in saying, that in regard to all these matters the position is exactly the same as it was before the Reforms Act.

This, then, is the scheme which is being worked by the Ministers, and we have been solemnly assured by the Moderates that the beginning of Swaraj is to be found in the Scheme. Much as I would like to end all unnecessary conflict, I cannot recommend to you the acceptance of the Act as a basis for co-operation with the Government. I will not purchase peace with dishonour, and so long as the Preamble to the Government of India Act stands and our right, our inherent right to regulate our own affairs, develop our own individuality and evolve our own destiny is not recognised, I must decline to consider any terms of peace.

The only method therefore of warfare open to us is non-co-operation ; and that is the programme which we adopted at two successive Congresses. We are devoted to the doctrine of non-co-operation, and you will not expect me to discuss its ethics. But there are friendly critics whose doubts we ought to dispel, if it is in our power to do so. They say that the doctrine of non-co-operation is a doctrine of negation, a doctrine of despair ; they stand aghast at the narrowness, the exclusiveness which such a

doctrine implies; and they draw our attention to the trend of political events in the world, and they ask us whether there is any hope for a nation that is determined to live a life of isolation.

I feel bound to answer the questions which have been raised by these critics, and, in doing so, I must ask myself the question: "What is non-co-operation?" I find it easier to answer the question by considering for a moment what is not non-co-operation. Non-co-operation is not a refusal to co-operate with the English people because they are English people. Non-co-operation does not advocate a policy of separation, a policy of isolation. Indeed, in our conflict with the forces of injustice and unrighteousness, we are not forgetting Him, to quote the words of Rabindranath: "Who is without distinction of class or colour, and Who, with His varied Shakti makes true provision for the inherent need of each and every class." But before we can join the forces of the world in the missionary enterprise to uplift humanity, it is at least necessary that we should find fulfilment in self-realization and self-development; for, it is only as a nation, that has realized itself, that we can hope to be of any service to humanity. Let us consider the matter for a moment. Our philosophy recognises that there is an essential unity behind all diversities, and that these diversities, "*Vaichitrya*" if I may use that expression, constitute the "*Lila*" of the Supreme Reality. The whole object of human endeavour, as I understand it, is to reconcile these endless diversities so as to affirm the Supreme Reality. God's *Lila* requires that every manifestation must have an unhampered growth. Every nation on the face of the earth represents such a manifestation. Like the various flowers in a garden, the nations must follow their own laws and work out their own destiny, so that in the end they might each and all contribute to the life and culture of humanity. In order that humanity may be served, the ultimate unity realized, that essential something, which distinguishes one nation from another, which I may describe as the individuality of the nation, must have

unfettered growth. This is the essence of the doctrine of nationalism for which men have been ready to lay down their lives. Nationalism is not an aggressive assertion of its individuality, distinct and separate from the other nation's, but it is a yearning for self-fulfilment, self-determination and self-realization as a part of the scheme of the universal humanity by which alone humanity can fulfil itself, determine itself and realize itself. Non-co-operation, therefore, though it does not refuse co-operation with the English, because they are English, will refuse to co-operate with any power or institution which embarrasses in any way the growth of the individuality of the Indian nation or hampers its self-fulfilment. Non-co-operation again does not reject Western culture because it is Western. But it recognises that there must be rejection in order that there may be whole-hearted acceptance. The cry for national education is not a protest against foreign education. But it is a protest against the imposition of foreign culture on India. Subjection is hard to bear, whether it be political or cultural; and indeed, as history shows, cultural subjection must inevitably follow in the wake of political subjection. Our desire for national education is only an endeavour to establish a continuity with the past and to enthrone our culture in our hearts. The doctrine that we preach does not exclude any light that may come from outside; but we say to those who care to listen to us, "First light the lamp that lies neglected in your home; look into the past and realise your present position in the light of the past; and then face the world with courage and receive whatever light that may come from outside."

What then is non-co-operation? I cannot do better than quote the eloquent words of Mr. Stokes: "It is the refusal to be a party to preventable evil; it is the refusal to accept or have any part in injustice; it is the refusal to acquiesce in wrongs that can be righted, or to submit to a state of affairs which is manifestly inconsistent with the dictates of righteousness. And as a consequence, it is the refusal to work with those who, on grounds of

interest or expediency, insist upon committing or perpetuating wrong."

But it is argued that the whole doctrine is a doctrine of negation, a doctrine of despair. I agree that in form the doctrine is one of negation, but I maintain that in substance it is one of affirmation. We break in order to build ; we destroy in order to construct ; we reject in order to accept. This is the whole history of human endeavour. If subjection be an evil, then we are bound to non-co-operate with every agency that seeks to perpetuate our subjection. That is a negation ; but it affirms our determination to be free, to win our liberty at any cost. Nor do I agree that the doctrine is one of despair. It is a doctrine of hope and of confidence and of unbounded faith in its efficacy. One has only to look at the faces of the sufferers as they are led to prison to realise that victory is already ours. It is not for nothing that Shaukat Ali and Mahomed Ali, courageous and resourceful, have lived and suffered. It is not for nothing that Lajpat Rai, one of the bravest of spirits that ever faced the sun, flung the order of the bureaucracy in its face and marched boldly into the prison that awaited him. It is not for nothing that Motilal Nehru, that prince amongst men, spurned the riches that were his, and defied the order that would enslave him, refusing no pain that the malice of power could invent. Time will not permit me to read to you all the names that are inscribed on the roll of honour ; but I must not forget to mention the students who are at once the hope and glory of the Motherland. I, who have been privileged to watch the current of political life in its very centre, can testify to the wonderful courage and unflinching devotion displayed by the students. Theirs is the inspiration behind the movement, theirs the victory. They are the torch-bearers of the time ; they are the pilgrims on the road. If suffering has been their lot, victory is their due.

This, then, is the philosophy on which the non-co-operation movement is based ; to defy with the absolute constancy the hostile powers that would hamper in any

way our growth and self-fulfilment as a nation, to keep its evil always in view, not hating the power but recognising its evil as an evil, and refusing no suffering that the malice of that power can invent. I admit, Gentlemen, that the ideal is very high, but I maintain that it is the only method which we can adopt for the early establishment of Swaraj. It requires no wisdom to see that if every one of us withdraws our helping-hand from the machine that is relentlessly working to prevent our growth and self-realization as a nation, the machine must, of necessity, stop its work. We are told, however, that once the machine of Government stops its work, we shall be swept away by the forces of disorder and reaction. There is a simple answer to this argument. The non-co-operation movement can never hope to succeed, unless our forces are properly organised, and the ethics of the movement properly understood by the nation. If they are not understood, the question will not arise ; for we cannot then hope to carry the struggle to a successful termination ; but if they are understood, then the inherent strength of the movement will prevent anarchy and bloodshed. But I cannot disguise from myself the fact that there have been disturbances in Bombay in the course of our propaganda. We must accept responsibility for such disturbances and frankly admit that, to the extent to which there has been violence, intimidation and coercion, we may be said to have failed. But what is the remedy ? Surely not to abjure our faith, but to see that the faith is properly understood. Bloodshed and disorder have been associated with every great movement that has taken place,—the spread of Christianity for instance. But is it to be argued, that because, in the spread of a New Idea there is danger of disorder and disturbance as it comes into conflict with old ideals and the old view of life, the missionaries must of necessity stay their hand and decline to carry the light they feel ? Such an argument is not worth a moment's consideration. You may argue, if you like, that our doctrine has not yet been understood by the people. You may argue, if you choose, that our programme ought to be revised in the light of the disturbances which have

taken place in Bombay. But the fact that disturbances have in fact taken place in a single small area is no argument against the essential truth of our movement. We must meet the situation with courage and devise means to prevent the recurrence of those disturbances ; but I cannot and I will not advise you to stay your hand from the non-co-operation movement. The fact that India has remained calm in spite of the recent arrests shows that the Bombay lesson has gone home. The recent manifestation of courage, endurance and remarkable self-control has in my opinion demonstrated the efficacy and the necessity of non-violent non-co-operation. And nothing can stop our onward march if the same spirit is still further developed and retained in the end.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the success of our movement has made a deep impression on the bureaucracy, if we may judge by the repressive policy which it has initiated and is carrying into effect. I observe that His Excellency the Viceroy objects to the policy being described as "repressive", but I have yet to know that the Seditious Meetings Act and the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act are part of the ordinary criminal law of the land. Indeed, if I am not mistaken, these were two of the Acts that were considered by the Committee appointed to examine repressive legislation. It is true that the Committee consisting of an Indian Chairman and six Indian members out of eight were unable to recommend the repeal of these two Acts. They have only shown what confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility. But the fact remains that the Acts were treated as repressive laws and discussed as such. Lord Reading is obviously in error in suggesting, as he has done, that the arrests now being made in Calcutta and in other parts of India are under the ordinary criminal law of the land. His Excellency asserts that there are organized attempts to challenge the law, and he does not understand what purpose is served by flagrant breach of the law for the purpose of challenging the Government and in order to compel arrest. I would, with all respect, put one question to His Excellency: If Japan planted her national

flag on Australia and gave Australia such freedom and such constitution as we enjoy under Great Britain, neither more nor less, what would His Excellency's advice be to the Australians, if they were determined to win freedom at all costs? And if Japan promulgated repressive laws without the sanction of the Australians, prohibiting meetings and declaring as unlawful all voluntary associations, through which alone the Australians could hope to work for national regeneration, what would His Excellency's advice be to the Australians, supposing they solemnly agreed to defy such laws and disregard the orders issued under such laws? I venture to think that His Excellency does not understand the situation which has arisen in India, therefore he is puzzled and perplexed. Rightly or wrongly, the Congress has adopted the policy of non-co-operation as the only legitimate political weapon available for its use. That is not breaking the law. Rightly or wrongly, the Congress has decided to boycott foreign goods, and especially foreign cloth. That is not breaking the law. Rightly or wrongly, the Congress has decided to boycott the visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. That is not breaking the law. Now in what way is the Congress to carry on its work except through the voluntary organisations which you have proclaimed under the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act? In striking at these voluntary organisations, you strike at the Congress propaganda which, you are bound to admit, is not unlawful. Why should it puzzle Your Excellency, assuming you credit us with the same amount of patriotism which you have, that we have solemnly resolved to disobey your orders and court imprisonment? I assert that it is you who have broken the law and not we. You have transgressed the law which secures to every subject, freedom of speech and action, so long as the speech and the action do not offend against the ordinary criminal law of the land. You have transgressed the law which secures to the subject the unrestricted right to hold meetings, so long as these meetings do not degenerate into unlawful assemblies. These are the common law rights of the subject

which you have transgressed, and I would remind Your Excellency that it is on the due observance of these elementary rights that the allegiance of the subject depends.

But then, it is said that these associations interfere with the administration of the law and with the maintenance of law and order. If they do, then the ordinary criminal law is there, and it ought to be sufficient. I have heard of no instance of violence in Calcutta; certainly none was reported to the police. Charges of violence can be investigated, and therefore they were not made. But charges of threat and intimidation are easy to make, because they cannot be investigated. I would ask the authorities one question: Was any case of threat or intimidation reported to the police? Has the local Government found, on enquiry, that quite apart from general allegations which can easily be made, there were specific cases of threat or intimidation practised by the non-co-operators on the "loyalists" of Calcutta? An English Journalist, signing himself as "Nominis Umbra," gave as his opinion to an English paper in Calcutta that the *hartal* was willingly acquiesced in by the people. We read in "A Ditcher's diary" in *Capital* of the 24th November last, "the people surrendered at discretion but it was impossible for a careful observer not to see that not only were they, for the most part, willing victims of new zoolum, but also that they exulted in the discomfiture of the Sirkar." If that be so, then what case is there for the declaration under Section 16 of the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act? Was the position in Calcutta on the 17th November last worse than the position in England when a big strike is in progress? And is it suggested that there resides any power in the Cabinet of England to put down a strike and prevent picketing? No, gentlemen, the real object of the application of the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act is not to protect society against the threats and intimidation of the non-co-operators, but to crush the Congress and the non-co-operation movement. It is to such threat that you have to return an answer.

There is another object which the Government has in view : it is to make by threat, intimidation and coercion, the visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to Calcutta a success. On your behalf I would respectfully lay before His Royal Highness our wishes of good will to him personally. There is no quarrel between us and the Royal House of England; but he comes here as the ambassador of a Power with whom we have decided not to co-operate ; as such we cannot receive him. Also, we are in no mood to take part in any rejoicing. We are fighting for our national existence, for the recognition of our elementary rights freely to live our own life and evolve our own destiny according to our lights. It would be sheer hypocrisy on our part to extend a national welcome to the ambassador of the Power that would deny us our elementary rights. There is, in the refusal to extend a national welcome to His Royal Highness, no disrespect either to him or to the Royal House of England. There is only determination not to co-operate with the Bureaucracy.

Thirty-seventh Congress—Gaya—1922

MR. C. R. DAS

SISTERS AND BROTHERS,—As I stand before you to-day a sense of overwhelming loss overtakes me, and I can scarcely give expression to what is uppermost in the minds of all and every one of us. After a memorable battle which he gave to the Bureaucracy, Mahatma Gandhi has been seized and cast into prison; and we shall not have his guidance in the proceedings of the Congress this year. But there is inspiration for all of us in the last stand which he made in the citadel of the enemy, in the last defiance which he hurled at the agents of the Bureaucracy. To read a story equal in pathos, in dignity, and in sublimity, you have to go back over two thousand years, when Jesus of Nazareth, "as one that preverted the people" stood to take his trial before a foreign tribunal.

> And Jesus stood before the Governor: and the Governor asked him saying:
>
> Art thou the king of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him: Thou sayest.
>
> And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answerd nothing.
>
> Then said Pilate unto him: Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee?
>
> And he answered him to never a word; in so much that the Governor marvelled greatly.

Mahatma Gandhi took a different course. He admitted that he was guilty, and he pointed out to the Public Prosecutor that his guilt was greater than he, the Prosecutor, had alleged; but he maintained that if he had offended against the law of Bureaucracy, in so offending he

had obeyed the law of God. If I may hazard a guess, the Judge who tried him and who passed a sentence of imprisonment on him was filled with the same feeling of marvel as Pontius Pilate had been.

Great in taking decisions, great in executing them, Mahatma Gandhi was incomparably great in the last stand which he made on behalf of his country. He is undoubtedly one of the greatest men that the world has ever seen. The world hath need of him, and if he is mocked and jeered at by "the people of importance," "the people with a stake in the country"—Scribes and Pharisees of the days of Christ—he will be gratefully remembered, now and always by a nation which he led from victory to victory.

"LAW AND ORDER"

Gentlemen, the time is a critical one and it is important to seize upon the real issue which divides the people from the Bureaucracy and its Indian allies. During the period of repression which began about this time last year it was this issue which pressed itself on our attention. This policy of repression was supported and in some cases instigated by the Moderate Leaders who are in the Executive Government. I do not charge those who supported the Government with dishonesty or want of patriotism. I say they were led away by the battle-cry of Law and Order. And it is because I believe that there is a fundamental confusion of thought behind this attitude of mind that I propose to discuss this plea of Law and Order. "Law and Order" has indeed been the last refuge of Bureaucracies all over the world.

It has been gravely asserted not only by the Bureaucracy but also by its apologists, the Moderate Party, that a settled Government is the first necessity of any people and that the subject has no right to present his grievances except in a constitutional way, by which I understand in some way recognised by the constitution. "If you cannot actively co-operate in the maintenance of "the law of the land" they say "it is your duty as a responsible

citizen to obey it passively. Non-resistance is the least that the Government is entitled to expect from you." This is the whole political philosophy of the Bureaucracy—the maintenance of law and order on the part of the Government, and an attitude of passive obedience and non-resistance on the part of the subject. But was not that the political philosophy of every English king from William the Conqueror to James II? And was not that the political philosophy of the Romanoffs, the Hohenzollerns and of the Bourbons? And yet freedom has come, where it has come, by disobedience of the very laws which were proclaimed in the name of law and order. Where the Government is arbitrary and despotic and the fundamental rights of the people are not recognised, it is idle to talk of law and order.

The doctrine has apparently made its way to this country from England. I shall, therefore, refer to English history to find out the truth about this doctrine. That history has recorded that most of the despots in England who exercised arbitrary sway over the people proposed to act for the good of the people and for the maintenance of law and order. English absolutism from the Normans down to the Stuarts tried to put itself on a constitutional basis through the process of this very law and order. The pathetic speech delivered by Charles I just before his execution puts the whole doctrine in a nutshell. "For the peple," he said,

> truly I desire their liberty and freedom as much as anybody whatsoever, but I must tell you that their liberty and freedom consists in having Government, those laws by which their lives and their goods may be their own. It is not their having a share in the Government, that is nothing appertaining to them. A subject and sovereign are clear different things.

The doctrine of law and order could not be stated with more admirable clearness. But though the English kings acted constitutionally in the sense that their acts were in accordance with the letter of law and were covered by precedents, the subjects always claimed that they were free to assert their fundamental rights and to wrest them from

the king by force or insurrections. The doctrine of law and order received a rude shock when King John was obliged to put his signature to the Magna Charta on the 15th of June, 1215. The 61st clause of the Charter is important for our purpose securing as it did to the subject the liberty of rebellion as a means for enforcing the due observance of the Charter by the Crown. Adams, a celebrated writer of the English Constitutional History, says that the conditional right to rebel is as much at the foundation of the English constitution to-day as it was in 1215. But though the doctrine of law and order had received a rude shock, it did not altogether die; for the intervening period the Crown claimed and asserted the right to raise money, not only by indirect taxes but also by forced loans and benevolences; and frequently exercised large legislative functions not only by applying what are known as suspending and dispensing powers but also by issuing proclamations. The Crown claimed, as Hallam says:

> Not only a kind of supplemental right of legislation to perfect and carry out what the spirit of existing laws might require but also a paramount supremacy, called sometimes the king's absolute or sovereign power which sanctioned commands beyond the legal prerogative, *for the sake of public safety* whenever the Council might judge to be that in hazard.

By the time of the Stuarts, the powers claimed by the Crown were recognised by the courts of law as well founded, and, to quote the words of Adams: "The forms of law became the engines for the perpetration of judicial murders." It is necessary to remember that it was the process of law and order that helped to consolidate the powers of the Crown; for it was again and again laid down by the Court of Exchequer that the power of taxation was vested in the Crown, where it was *for the general benefit of the people.* As Adams says: "The Stuarts asserted a legal justification for everything done by them," and, "on the whole, history was with the king."

But how did the Commons meet this assertion of law and order? They were strict non-co-operators both within and ouside the Parliament. Within the Parliament they

again and again refused to vote supplies unless their grievances were redressed. The king retorted by raising Customs duties on his own initiative and the courts of law supported him. The Commons passed a resolution to the effect that persons paying them "should be reputed betrayers of liberties of England and enemies to the same." There was little doubt that revolution was on the land; and King Charles finding himself in difficulty gave his Royal Assent to the Bill of Rights on the 17th of June 1626. The Bill of Rights constitutes a triumph for non-co-operators; for it was by their refusal to have any part or share in the administration of the country that the Commons compelled the king to acknowledge their rights. The events that followed between 1629 and 1640 made the history of England. Inspite of the Bill of Rights, the king continued to raise Customs duties, and Elliot and his friends were put on their trial. They refused to plead, and the result was disastrous for the arbitrary power of the king. The king levied Ship Money on the nation. The chief constables of various places replied that the Sheriffs had no authority to assess or tax any man without the consent of the Parliament. On the refusal on the part of the people to pay the taxes their cattle were distrained, and no purchaser could be found for them. The king took the opinion of the Exchequer Court on the question whether, *when the good and safety of the kingdom in general* is concerned, *and the whole kingdom is in danger*, mark how the formula has been copied verbatim in the Government of India Act, "may not the king . . . command all the subjects of his kingdom, to provide and furnish such number of ships, with men, victuals and munitions, and for such time as he shall think fit *for the defence and safeguard of the kingdom from such peril*,"—again the formula!—"and by law compel the doing thereof in case of refusal and refractoriness? And whether in such case, is not the king sole judge, both of the danger, and when and how the same is to be prevented?" The judges answered in the affirmative and maintained the answer in the celebrated case which Hampden brought before them.

I desire to emphasize one point, and that is, that throughout the long and bitter struggle between the Stuarts and Parliament, the Stuarts acted for the maintenance of law and order, and there is no doubt that both law and history were on their side. On the eve of the civil war, the question that divided the parties was this: Could the Crown in the maintenance of law and order claim the passive obedience of the subject, or was there any power of resistance in the subject, though that resistance might result in disorder and in breaches of law? The adherents of the Parliament stood for the power and the majesty of the people, the authority and "independency of Parliament," individual liberty, the right to resist, and the right to compel abdication and secure deposition of the Crown; in a word, they stood for Man against the coercive powers of the State. The adherents of the Crown stood for indefeasible right, a right to claim passive obedience and secure non-resistance on the part of the subject through the process of law and order; in a word, they stood for State coercion and compulsory co-operation against individual liberty.

The issue was decided in favour of Parliament, but as it must happen in every war of arms, the victory for individual liberty was only temporary. Though the result of civil war was disastrous from the point of view of individual liberty and though it required another revolution, this time a non-violent revolution to put individual liberty on a sure foundation, "the knowledge that the subject had sat in rude judgment on their king, man to man, speeded the slow emancipation of the mind from the shackles of custom and ancient reverence."

The revolution of 1688—a bloodless revolution—secured for England the rule of law which is the only foundation for the maintenance of law and order. It completed the work which the Long Parliament had begun and which the execution of Charles I had interrupted. But how was the peaceful revolution of 1688 brought about? By defiance of authority and by rigid adherence to the principle that it is the inalienable right of the subject to

resist the exercise by the executive of wide, arbitrary or discretionary powers of constraint.

The principle for which the revolution of 1688 stood was triumphantly vindicated in the celebrated case of Dr. Sacheverell. In the course of a sermon which he had preached, he gave expression to the following sentiment:

> The grand security of our Government and the very pillar upon which it stands, is founded upon the steady belief of the subjects' obligation to an absolute and unconditional obedience to the supreme power in all things lawful, and the utter illegality of resistance on any pretence whatsoever.

This is the doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance—the doctrine of law and order which is proclaimed to-day by every Bureaucrat in country, foreign or domestic, and which is supposed to be the last word on the subject's duty and Government's rights. But mark how they solved the problem in England in 1710. The Commons impeached Dr. Sacheverell giving expression to a view so destructive of individual liberty, and the Lords, by a majority of votes, found him guilty. The speeches delivered in the course of the trial are interesting. I desire to quote a few sentences from some of those speeches. Sir Joseph Jakyll, in the course of his speech, said:

> That as the law is the only measure of the Prince's authority, and the people's subjection, so the law derives its being and efficacy from common consent; and to place it on any other foundation than common consent, is to take away the obligation, this motion of common consent puts both prince and people *under*, to observe the laws. My Lords, as the doctrine of unlimited non-resistance was impliedly renounced by the whole nation in the revolution, so diverse Acts of Parliament afterwards passed, expressing their renunciation, ... and therefore, I shall only say that it can never be supposed that the laws were made to set up a despotic power to destroy themselves, and to warrant the subversion of a constitution of a Government which they were designed to establish and defend.

Mr. Walpole put the whole argument in a nutshell when he said:

> The doctrine of unlimited, unconditional passive obedience was first invented to support arbitrary and despotic power and was never promoted or countenanced by any Government that had not designs, some time or other of making use of it.

The argument against the doctrine of law and order could not be put more clearly or forcibly: for his argument comes to this, the doctrine is not an honest one, if law and order is the process by which absolutism consolidates its powers and strengthens its hand. I will make one more quotation, and that is from the speech of Major-General Stanhope:

> As to the doctrine itself of absolute non-resistance it should seem needless to prove by argument that it is inconsistent with the law of reason, with the law of nature, and with the practice of all ages and countries. And indeed, one may appeal to the practice of all churches and of all states and of all nations in the world, how they behaved themselves when they found their civil and religious constitutions invaded and oppressed by tyranny.

This, then, is the history of the freedom movement in England. The conclusion is irresistible that it is not by acquiescence in the doctrine of law and order that the English people have obtained the recognition of their fundamental rights. It follows from the survey that I have made, firstly, that no regulation is law unless it is based on the consent of the people; secondly, where such consent is wanting, the people are under no obligation to obey; thirdly, where such laws are not only not based on the consent of the people but profess to attack their fundamental rights, the subjects are entitled to compel their withdrawal by force or insurrections; fourthly, that law and order is, and has always been, a plea for absolutism, and lastly, there can be neither law nor order before the real reign of law begins.

I have dealt with the question at some length, as the question is a vital one, and there are many Moderates who still think that it is the duty of every loyal subject to assist the Government in the maintenance of law and order. The personal liberty of every Indian to-day depends to a great extent on the exercise by persons in authority of wide, arbitrary or discretionary powers. Where such powers are allowed the rule of law is denied. To find out the extent to which this exploded doctrine of law and order influences the minds of sober and learned men, you have only to read the Report of the Committee appointed to examine the

Repressive Laws. You will find in the Report neither the vision of the patriot nor the wisdom of the statesman; but you will find an excessive worship of that much advertised, but much misunderstood phrase "Law and Order." Why is Regulation 3 of 1818 to be amended and kept on the Statute Book? Because for the protection of the frontiers of India and the fulfilment of the responsibility of the Government of India in relation to Indian States, there must be some enactment to arm the Executive with powers to restrict the movements and activities of certain persons who, though not coming within the scope of any criminal law, have to be put under some measure of restraint. Why are the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1908 and the Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act, 1911, to be retained on the Statute Book? For the preservation of law and order. They little think, these learned gentlemen responsible for the Report, that these Statutes, giving as they do to the Executive, wide, arbitrary and discretionary powers of constraint, constitute a state of things wherein it is the duty of every individual to resist and to defy the tyranny of such lawless laws. These Statutes in themselves constitute a breach of law and order, for, law and order is the result of the rule of law; and where you deny the existence of the rule of law, you cannot turn round and say: "It is your duty as law-abiding citizens to obey the law."

We have had abundance of this law and order during the last few years of our National History. The last affront delivered to the nation, was the promulgation of an Executive order under the authority of the Criminal Law Amendment Act making the legitimate work of Congress Volunteers illegal and criminal. This was supported by our Moderate friends on the ground that it is the duty of the law-abiding subject to support the maintenance of law and order. The doctrine, as I said before, has travelled all the way from the shores of England. But may I ask—is there one argument advanced to-day by the Bureaucracy and its friends which was not advanced with equal clearness by the Stuarts? When the Stuarts arrogated to

themselves a discretionary power of committing to prison all persons who were on any account obnoxious to the Court, they made the excuse that the power was necessary for the safety of the nation, and the power was resisted in England, not because it was never exercised for the safety of the nation, but because the existence of the power was inconsistent with the existence at the same time of individual liberty. When the Stuarts claimed the right to legislate by proclamations and by wide exercise of suspending and dispersing powers, they did so on the express ground that such legislation was necessary for public safety. That right was denied by the English nation, not because such legislation was not necessary for public safety, but because such right could not co-exist with the fundamental right of the nation to legislate for itself. Is the power of the Governor-General to certify that the passage of a Bill is essential for safety or tranquillity or interest of British India any different from the power claimed by the Stuarts? There is indeed a striking resemblance between the power conferred on the Governor-General and the Governors of the provinces and the powers claimed by the Tudors and the Stuarts. When the Stuarts claimed the right to raise revenue on their own initiative, they disclaimed any intention to exercise such right *when the good and safety of the kingdom in general is concerned and the whole kingdom is in danger.* That right was registered in England, not because the revenues raised by them were not necessary for the good and safety of the kingdom, but because that right was inconsistent with the fundamental right of the people to pay such taxes only as were determined by the representatives of the people for the people. Is the power conferred on the Governor to certify that the expenditure provided for by a particular demand not assented to by the Legislature is essential to the discharge of his responsibility for the subject any different from the power claimed by the Stuarts? It should be patent to everybody that we do not live under the rule of law, and the history of England has proclaimed that it is idle to talk of the maintenance of law and order when large discretionary powers of constraint are

vested in the Executive. The manhood of England triumphantly resisted the pretensions of "Law and Order." If there is manhood in India to-day, India will successfully resist the same pretensions advanced by the Indian Bureaucracy.

I have quoted from English history at length because the argument furnished by that history appeals to most people who are frightened by popular movements into raising the cry of "law and order," and who think that the development of the great Indian nation must follow the lines laid down in that history. For myself I oppose the pretensions of "law and order," not on historical precedent, but on the ground that it is the inalienable right of every individual and of every nation to stand on truth and to offer a stubborn resistance to the promulgation of lawless laws. There was a law in the time of Christ which forbade the people from eating on the Sabbath, but allowed the priests to profane the Sabbath. And how Christ dealt with the law is narrated in the New Testament:

> At that time Jesus went on the Sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an hungered, and began to pluck the ear of corn, and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him: Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath day.
>
> But he said unto them: Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungered and they that were with him.
>
> How he entered into the house of God and did eat the shewbread which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?
>
> Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the Sabbath days the priests in the temple profaned the Sabbath, and are blameless?

The truth is, that law and order is for Man, and not Man for Law and Order. The development of nationality is a sacred task and anything which impedes that task is an obstacle which the very force and power of nationality must overcome. If, therefore, you interpose a doctrine to impede the task, why, the doctrine must go. If you have recourse to law and order to establish and defend the rule of law then your law and order is entitled to claim the respect of

all law-abiding citizens; but as soon as you have recourse to it not to establish and defend the rule of law but to destroy and attack it, there is no longer any obligation on us to respect it, for a Higher Law, the natural law, the law of God compels us to offer our stubborn resistance to it. When I find something put forward in the sacred name of law and order which is deliberately intended to hinder the growth, the development, and the self-realisation of the nation, I have no hesitation whatever in proclaiming that such law and order is an outrage on man and an insult to God.

But though our Moderate friends are often deluded by the battle-cry of law and order, I rejoice when I hear that cry. It means that the Bureaucracy is in danger and that Bureaucracy has realized its danger. It is not without reason that a false issue is raised; and the fact that false issue has been raised fills me with hope and courage. I ask my countrymen to be patient and to press the charge. Freedom has already advanced when the alarm of law and order is sounded; that is the history of Bureaucracies all over the world.

In the meantime it is our duty to keep our ideal steadfast. We must not forget that we are on the eve of great changes, that world forces are working all around us and that the battle of freedom has yet to be won.

NATIONALISM: THE IDEAL

What is the ideal which we must set before us? The first and foremost is the ideal of nationalism. Now what is nationalism? It is, I conceive, a process through which a nation expresses itself and finds itself, not in isolation from other nations, not in opposition to other nations, but as part of a great scheme by which, in seeking its own expression and therefore its own identity, it materially assists the self-expression and self-realisation of other nations as well: Diversity is as real as unity. And in order that unity of the world may be established it is essential that each nationality should proceed on its own line and find fulfilment in self-expression and self-realisation.

The nationality of which I am speaking must not be confused with the conception of nationality as it exists in Europe to-day. Nationalism in Europe is an aggressive nationalism, a selfish nationalism, a commercial nationalism, of gain and loss. The gain of France is the loss of Germany and the gain of Germany is the loss of France. Therefore, French nationalism is nurtured on the hatred of Germany, and German nationalism is nurtured on the hatred of France. It is not yet realised that you cannot hurt Germany without hurting Humanity, and in consequence hurting France; and that you cannot hurt France without hurting Humanity, and in consequence hurting Germany. That is European nationalism; that is not the nationalism of which I am speaking to you to-day. I contend that each nationality constitutes a particular stream of the great unity, but no nation can fulfil itself unless and until it becomes itself and at the same time realise its identity with Humanity. The whole problem of nationalism is therefore to find that stream and to face that destiny. If you find the current and establish a continuity with the past, then the process of self-expression has begun, and nothing can stop the growth of nationality.

Throughout the pages of Indian history, I find a great purpose unfolding itself. Movement after movement has swept over this vast country, apparently creating hostile forces, but in reality stimulating the vitality and moulding the life of the people into one great nationality. If the Aryans and the non-Aryans met, it was for the purpose of making one people out of them. Brahmanism with its great culture succeeded in binding the whole of India and was indeed a mighty unifying force. Buddhism with its protests against Brahmanism served the same great historical purpose; and from Magadha to Taxila was one great Buddhistic empire which succeeded not only in broadening the basis of Indian unity, but in creating, what is perhaps not less important, the greater India beyond the Himalayas and beyond the seas, so much so that the sacred city where we have met may be regarded as a place of

pilgrimage of millions and millions of people of Asiatic races. Then came the Mahomedans of diverse races, but with one culture which was their common heritage. For a time it looked as if here was a disintegrating force, an enemy to the growth of Indian nationalism, but the Mahomedans made their home in India, and, while they brought a new outlook and a wonderful vitality to the Indian life, with infinite wisdom, they did as little as possible to disturb the growth of life in the villages where India really lives. This new outlook was necessary for India; and if the two sister streams met, it was only to fulfil themselves and face the destiny of Indian history. Then came the English with their alien culture, their foreign methods, delivering a rude shock to this growing nationality; but the shock has only completed the unifying process so that the purpose of history is practically fulfilled. The great Indian nationality is in sight. It already stretches its hands across the Himalayas not only to Asia but to the whole of the world, not aggressively, but to demand its recognition, and to offer its contribution. I desire to emphasise that there is no hostility between the ideal of nationality and that of world peace. Nationalism is the process through which alone will world peace come. A full and unfettered growth of nationalism is necessary for world peace just as a full and unfettered growth of individuals is necessary for nationality. It is the conception of aggressive nationality in Europe that stands in the way of world peace; but once the truth is grasped that it is not possible for a nation to inflict a loss on another nation without at the same time inflicting a loss on itself, the problem of Humanity is solved. The essential truth of nationality lies in this, that it is necessary for each nation to develop itself, express itself and realise itself, so that Humanity itself may develop itself, express itself and realise itself. It is my belief that this truth of nationality will endure, although, for the moment, unmindful of the real issue the nations are fighting amongst themselves; and, if I am not mistaken, it is the very instinct of selfishness and self-preservation which will ultimately solve the problem, not the narrow and the

mistaken selfishness of the present but a selfishness universalized by intellect and transfigured by spirit, a selfishness that will bring home to the nations of the world that in the efforts to put down their neighbours lies their own ruin and suppression.

We have, therefore, to foster the spirit of Nationality. True development of the Indian nation must necessarily lie in the path of Swaraj. A question has often been asked as to what is Swaraj. Swaraj is indefinable and is not to be confused with any particular system of Government. There is all the difference in the world between Swaraj and Swarajya. Swaraj is the natural expression of the national mind. The full outward expression of that mind covers, and must necessarily cover, the whole life history of a nation. Yet it is true that Swaraj begins when the true development of a nation begins, because as I have said, Swaraj is the expression of the national mind. The question of nationalism, therefore, looked at from another point of view, is the same question as that of Swaraj. The question of all questions in India to-day is the attainment of Swaraj.

NON-VIOLENT NON-CO-OPERATION

I now come to the question of method. I have to repeat that it has been proved beyond any doubt that the method of non-violent non-co-operation is the only method which we must follow to secure a system of Government which may in reality be the foundation of Swaraj. It is hardly necessary to discuss the philosophy of non-co-operation. I shall simply state the different viewpoints from which this question may be discussed. From the national point of view the method of non-co-operation means the attempt of the nation to concentrate upon its own energy and to stand on its own strength. From the ethical point of view, non-co-operation means the method of self-purification, the withdrawal from that which is injurious to the development of the nation, and therefore to the good of humanity. From the spiritual point of view, Swaraj means that isolation which in the language of Sadhana is called *protyahar*—that withdrawal from the

forces which are foreign to our nature—an isolation and withdrawal which is necessary in order to bring out from our hidden depths the soul of the nation in all her glory. I do not desire to labour the point, but from every conceivable point of view, the method of non-violent non-co-operation must be regarded as the true method of "following in the path of Swaraj."

FORCE AND VIOLENCE

Doubt has, however, been expressed in some quarters about the soundness of the principle of non-violence. I cannot refuse to acknowledge that there is a body of Indian opinion within the country as well as outside according to which non-violence is an ideal abstraction incapable of realisation, and that the only way in which Swaraj can ever be attained is by the application of force and violence. I do not for a moment question the courage, sacrifice, and patriotism of those who hold this view. I know that some of them have suffered for the cause which they believe to be true. But may I be permitted to point out that apart from any question of principle, history has proved over and over again the utter futility of revolutions brought about by force and violence? I am one of those who hold to non-violence on principle. But let us consider the question of expediency. Is it possible to attain Swaraj by violent means? The answer which history gives is, an emphatic "No." Take all the formidable revolutions of the world.

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

The history of the French Revolution is the history of a struggle at the first instance between the Crown and the nobility on one side and the Representative Assemblies with armed Paris on the other. Both took to violence, one to the bayonet and the other to the pike. The pike succeeded because the bayonet was held with uncertain hands. And then, as is usual after the victory gained with violence, the popular party was sharply divided between two sections—the Girondins and the Jacobins. Again there was an appeal to force. The Girondins asked the

provinces to rise in arms, the Jacobins asked Paris to rise in arms. Paris being nearer and stronger, the Girondins were defeated and sent to the guillotine—the Jacobins seized the power. But it did not take them many months to fall out among themselves. First Robespierre and Danton sent Hebert and Chaumette to the guillotine, then Robespierre sent Danton to the guillotine. Robespierre in his turn was guillotined by Collot, Billaud and Tallien. These men, again, were banished by others to the far off South America. If there was a slight difference of views between the Girondins and the Jacobins—there was practically none between the different sections of the Jacobins. The whole question was which of the various sections was to rule France. Force gave way to stronger force and at last under Napoleon, France experienced a despotism similar to if not worse than the despotism of Louis XIV. As regards liberty there was not more liberty in France under the terrible Committee of Public Safety and Napoleon than under Louis XIV or Louis XV. The law of Prairial was certainly much worse than Letters de Cachet. And the people—? On the Pont au Change, on the Place de Greve, in long sheds, Mercier, at the end of the Revolution, saw working men at their repast. One's allotment of daily bread had sunk to an ounce and-a-half. "Plates containing each the grilled herrings, sprinkled with shorn onions, wetted with a little vinegar; to this add some morsel of boiled prunes, and lentils swimming in a clear sauce; at these frugal tables I have seen them ranged by the hundred; consuming without bread, their scant messes, far too moderate for the keenness of their appetite, and the extent of their stomach." "Seine water," remarks Carlyle grimly, "rushing plenteous by, will supply the deficiency." One cannot forget the exclamation of Carlyle in this connection:

O Man of Toil, Thy struggling and thy daring, these six long years of insurrection and tribulation, thou hast profited nothing by it, then? Thou consumest thy herring and water, in the blessed gold-red of evening. O why was the Earth so beautiful, becrimsoned with dawn and twilight, if man's dealings with man were to make it a vale of scarcity, of tears, not even soft tears? Destroying of Bastilles, discomfiting of Brunswicks, fronting of Principalities and

Powers, of Earth and Tophet, all that thou hast dared and endured, —it was for a Republic of the Saloons? Aristocracy of Feudal Parchment has passed away with a mighty rushing; and now, by a natural course, we arrive at Aristocracy of the Moneybag. It is the course through which all European Societies are, at this hour, travelling. Apparently a still baser sort of Aristocracy? An infinitely baser; the basest yet known.

Even to-day, France is plodding her weary way towards Swaraj.

REVOLUTIONS IN ENGLAND

The history of England proves the same truth. The revolution of the Barons in 1215 took away or purported to take away the powers from the King; but the power fell into the hands of the aristocracy, and democracy did not share in the triumph of the Barons. Thus the great Charter, as a great historian has observed, was thus not a Charter of Liberty but of liberties. The revolution in the reign of Charles I produced a new dictator who suppressed freedom. The work which the Long Parliament began was interrupted by the revolution which followed the execution of the King, and it required another revolution this time, a bloodless revolution, to complete the work. I deny that the work is yet complete. The continual class war and the obvious economic injustice do not proclaim that freedom which England claimed for herself. I maintained that no people has yet succeeded in winning freedom by force and violence. The truth is that love of power is a formidable factor to be reckoned with, and those who secure that power by violence will retain that power by violence. The use of violence degenerates them who use it, and it is not easy for them, having seized the power, to surrender it. And they find it easier to carry on the work of their predecessor, retaining their power in their own hands. Non-violence does not carry with it that degeneration which is inherent in the use of violence.

REVOLUTIONS IN ITALY AND RUSSIA

The Revolutions in Italy and Russia illustrate the same principle. The Italian Revolution inspired by Mazzini and worked out by Garibaldi and Cavour, did

not result in the attainment of Swaraj. The freedom of Italy is yet in the making, and the men and women of Italy are to-day looking forward to another revolution. If it results in a war of violence, it will again defeat its purpose, but only to allow Freedom and Non-violence to triumph in the end.

The recent revolution in Russia is very interesting study. The shape which it has now assumed is due to the attempt to force Marxian doctrines and dogmas on the unwilling genius of Russia. Violence will again fail. If I have read the situation accurately I expect a counter revolution. The soul of Russia must struggle to free herself from the socialism of Karl Marx. It may be an independent movement, or it may be that the present movement contains within itself the power of working out that freedom. In the meantime the fate of Russia is trembling in the balance.

NON-VIOLENT NON-CO-OPERATION THE ONLY METHOD

I believe in revolutions, but I repeat, violence defeats freedom. The revolution of non-violence is slower but surer. Step by step the soul of the nation emerges and step by step the nation marches on in the path of Swaraj. The only method by which Freedom can be attained in India at any rate, is the method of non-violent non-co-operation. Those who believe this method to be impracticable would do well to ponder over the Akali movement. When I saw the injuries of the wounded at Amritsar and heard from their lips that not one of them had even wished to meet violence by violence inspite of such grave provocation, I said to myself: "Here was the triumph of non-violence."

Non-violence is not an idle dream. It was not in vain that Mahatma declared: "Put up thy sword into the sheath." Let those who are "of the truth" hear his voice as those others heard a mightier voice two thousand years ago.

The attempt of the Indian nation to attain Swaraj by this method was, however, met by severe repression. The

time has come for us to estimate our success as well as our failure. So far as repression is concerned, it is easy to answer the question. I have not the least doubt in my mind that the nation has triumphed over the repression which was started and continued to kill the soul of the movement.

SUCCESS OF NON-VIOLENT NON-CO-OPERATION

But the question, which agitates most minds, is as to whether we have succeeded in our work of non-violent non-co-operation. There is, I am sorry to say, a great deal of confusion of thought behind the question. It is assumed that a movement must either succeed or fail, whereas the truth is that human movements, I am speaking of genuine movements, neither altogether succeed nor altogether fail. Every genuine movement proceeds from an ideal, and the ideal is always higher than the achievement. Take the French Revolution. Was it a success? Was it a failure? To predicate either would be a gross historical blunder. Was the non-co-operation movement in India a success? Yes, a mighty success when we think of the desire for Swaraj which it has succeeded in awakening throughout the length and breadth of this vast country. It is a great success when we think of the practical result of such awakening, in the money which the nation contributed, in the enrolment of members of the Indian National Congress and in the boycott of foreign cloth. I go further and say that the practical achievement also consist of the loss of prestige suffered by Educational Institutions and the Courts of Law and the Reformed Councils throughout the country. If they are still resorted to, it is because of the weakness of our countrymen. The country has already expressed its strong desire to end these institutions. Yet it must be admitted that from another point of view, when we assess the measure of our success in the spirit of Arithmetic, we are face to face with "the petty done" and "the undone vast." There is much which remains to be accomplished. Non-violence has to be more firmly established. The work of non-co-operation has to be

strengthened, and the field of non-co-operation has to be extended. We must be firm but reasonable. The spirit of sacrifice has got to be further strengthened, and we must proceed with the work of destruction and creation more vigorously than before. I say to our critics: I admit we have failed in many directions, but will you also not admit our success where we have succeeded?

CHARGE OF CORRUPTING THE YOUTHS

We have been denounced by the Moderates for having corrupted the youth of the country. It has been asserted that we have taught sons to disobey their fathers, the pupils their teachers, and the subject the Government. We plead guilty to the charge, and we rely upon every spiritual movement as argument in our support. Christ himself was tried for having corrupted the people, and the answer which he gave in anticipation is as emphatic as it is instructive:

> Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I come not to send peace, but a sword.
>
> For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

CHARGE OF HYPOCRISY

It has been said that with love on our lips we have been preaching the gospel of hatred. Never was such a vile slander uttered. It may be we have failed to love, it may be we lost ourselves, some of us, in hatred, but that only shows our weakness and imperfectness. Judge us by our ideal, not by what we have achieved. Wherever we have fallen short of that ideal put it down to our weakness. On behalf of the Indian National Congress, I deny the charge of hypocrisy. To those who are ever anxious to point out our defects, I say with all humility: "My friends, if we are weak, come and join us and make us stronger. If the leaders are worthless, come and join us to lead and the leaders will stand aside. If you do not believe in the ideal, what is the use of always criticising us in the light of that ideal?" We need no

critic to tell us how far we have fallen short of that ideal. Evidence of weakness has met me from every direction in which I have looked; but in spite of our defects of human weakness, of human imperfection, I feel bold enough to say that our victory is assured and that the Bureaucracy knows that our victory is assured.

HOW TO APPLY THE METHOD OF NON-VIOLENT NON-CO-OPERATION

But though the method of non-violent non-co-operation is sure and certain, we have now to consider how best to apply that method to the existing circumstances of the country. I do not agree with those who think that the spirit of the nation is so dead that non-violent non-co-operation is no longer possible. I have given the matter my earnest thought, and I desire to make it perfectly clear that there is absolutely no reason for entertaining any feelings of doubt or despair. The outward appearance of the people to-day is somewhat deceptive. They appear to be in a tired condition and a sense of fatigue has partially overcome them. But beneath all this exterior of quietude, the pulse of the nation beats as strongly as before and as hopefully as at the beginning of this movement. We have to consolidate the strength of the nation. We have to devise a plan of work which will stimulate their energy so that, we can accelerate our journey towards Swaraj. I shall place before you one by one the items of work which, in my opinion, the Indian National Congress should prescribe for the nation.

DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES

It should commence its work for the year by a clearer declaration of the rights of the different communities in India under the Swaraj Government. So far as the Hindus and the Mahomedans are concerned, there should be a clear and emphatic confirmation of what is known as the Lucknow Compact, and along with that there should be an emphatic recognition of each other's rights, and each should be prepared to undergo some kind

of sacrifice in favour of the other. Let me give an instance to make my meaning clear. Every devout Mussulman objects to any music in front of a mosque, and every devout and orthodox Hindu objects to cows being slaughtered. May not the Hindus and the Mussulmans of India enter into a solemn compact so that there may not be any music before any mosque and that no cows may be slaughtered? Other instances may be quoted. There should be a scheme of a series of sacrifices to be suffered by each community so that they may advance shoulder to shoulder in the path of Swaraj. As regards the other communities such as Sikhs, Christians and Parsis, the Hindus and the Mahomedans who constitute the bulk of the people should be prepared to give them even more than their proportional share in the Swaraj administration. I suggest that the Congress should bring about real agreement between all these communities by which the rights of every minority should be clearly recognised in order to remove all doubts which may arise and all apprehensions which probably exist. I need hardly add that I include among Christians not only pure Indians, but also Anglo-Indians and other people who have chosen to make India their home. Such an agreement as I have indicated was always necessary but such an agreement is specially necessary in view of the work which faces us to-day.

FOREIGN PROPAGANDA

I further think that the policy of exclusiveness which we have been following during the last two years should now be abandoned. There is in every country a number of people who are selfless followers of liberty and who desire to see every country free. We can no longer afford to lose their sympathy and co-operation. In my opinion, there should be established Congress Agencies in America and in every European country. We must keep ourselves in touch with world movements and be in constant communication with the lovers of freedom all over the world.

THE GREAT ASIATIC FEDERATION

Even more important than this is participation of India in the great Asiatic Federation, which I see in the

course of formation. I have hardly any doubt that the Pan-Islamic movement, which was started on a somewhat narrow basis, has given way or is about to give way to the great Federation of all Asiatic people. It is the union of the oppressed nationalities of Asia. Is India to remain outside this union? I admit that our freedom must be won by ourselves but such a bond of friendship and love of sympathy and co-operation, between India and the rest of Asia, nay, between India and all the liberty-loving people of the world is destined to bring about world peace. World peace to my mind means the freedom of every nationality, and I go further and say that no nation in the face of the earth can be really free when other nations are in bondage. The policy which we have hitherto pursued was absolutely necessary for the concentration of the work which we took upon ourselves to perform, and I agreed to that policy whole-heartedly. The hope of the attainment of Swaraj or a substantial basis of Swaraj in the course of the year made such concentration absolutely necessary. To-day that very work demands broader sympathy and a wider outlook.

DEMANDS FOR PUNJAB WRONGS, KHILAFAT, SWARAJ, ETC.

We are on the eve of great changes, and the world forces are upon us. The victory of Kemal Pasha has broken the bond of Asia, and she is all astir with life. It is Prometheus who "spoke within her" and her "thoughts are like the many forests of vale through which the might of whirlwind and of rain had passed." The stir within every European country for the real freedom of the people has also worked a marvellous transformation in the mentality of subject races. That which was more or less a matter of ideal has now come within the range of practical politics. The Indian nation has found out its bearings. At such a time as this, it is necessary for us to re-consider and to re-state our demands. Our demands regarding the Punjab wrongs have got to be restated because many of them have already been realised; our demands regarding Khilafat have got to be

re-considered because some of them have already been worked out, and we hope that before the Lausanne Commission has finished its work very little of it will remain unrealised. Our demand for Swaraj must now be presented in a more practical shape. The Congress should frame a clear scheme of what we mean by a system of Government which may serve as a real foundation for Swaraj. Hitherto, we have not defined any such system of Government. We have not done so advisedly as it was on the psychological aspect of Swaraj that we concentrated our attention. But circumstances to-day have changed. The desire is making us impatient. It is therefore the duty of the Congress to place before the country a clear scheme of the system of Government which we demand. Swaraj, as I have said, is indefinable and is not to be confused with any particular system of Government. Yet the national mind must express itself, and although the full outward expression of Swaraj covers the whole life history of a nation, the formulation of such a demand cannot be any further delayed.

SCHEME OF GOVERNMENT

It is hardly within the province of this address to deal with any detailed scheme of any such Government. I cannot, however, allow this opportunity to pass without giving you an expression of my opinion as to the character of that system of Government. No system of Government which is not for the people and by the people can never be regarded as the true foundation of Swaraj. I am firmly convinced that a Parliamentary Government is not a Government by the people. Many of us believe that the Middle Class must win Swaraj for the masses. I do not believe in the possibility of any class movement being ever converted into a movement for Swaraj. If to-day the British Parliament grants provincial autonomy in the provinces with responsibility in the Central Government, I, for one, will protest against it, because that will inevitably lead to the concentration of power in the hands of the Middle Class. I do not believe that the Middle Class will then part with their power. How will it profit India, if in

place of the White Bureaucracy that now rules over her, there is substituted an Indian Bureaucracy of the middle classes. Bureaucracy is Bureaucracy, and I believe that the very idea of Swaraj is inconsistent with the existence of a Bureaucracy. My ideal of Swaraj will never be satisfied unless the people co-operate with us in its attainment. Any other attempt will inevitably lead to what European Socialists call the "Bourgeoise" Government. In France and in England and in other European countries it is the middle class who fought the battle of freedom, and the result is that power is still in the hands of this class. Having usurped the power they are unwilling to part with it. If to-day the whole of Europe is engaged in a battle of real freedom, it is because the nations of Europe are gathering their strength to wrest this power from the hands of the middle classes. I desire to avoid the repetition of that chapter of European history. It is for India to show the light to the world—Swaraj by non-violence and Swaraj by the people.

To me the organisation of village life and the practical autonomy of small local centres are more important than either provincial autonomy or central responsibility; and if the choice lay between the two, I would unhesitatingly accept the autonomy of the local centres. I must not be understood as implying that the village centres will be disconnected units. They must be held together by a system of co-operation and integration. For the present, there must be power in the hands of the provincial and the Indian Government; but the ideal should be accepted once for all, that the proper function of the central authority, whether in the Provincial or in the Indian Government is to advise, having a residuary power of control only in case of need, and to be exercised under proper safeguards. I maintain that real Swaraj can only be attained by vesting the power of Government in these local centres, and I suggest that the Congress should appoint a Committee to draw up a scheme of Government which would be acceptable to the nation.

The most advanced thought of Europe is turning from the false individualism on which European culture and institutions are based to what I know to be the ideal of the ancient village organisation of India. According to this thought modern democracy of the ballot box and large crowds has failed, but real democracy has not yet been tried. What is the real democracy of modern European thought?

The foundation of real democracy must be laid in small centres—not gradual decentralisation which implies a previous centralisation—but a gradual integration of the practically autonomous small centres into one living harmonious whole. What is wanted is a human state not a mechanical contrivance. We want the growth of institutions and organisations which are really dynamic in their nature and not the more static stability of a centralised state.

This strain of European thought found some expression in the philosophy of Hegel according to whom "human institutions belong to the region, not of inert externality, but of mind and purpose, and are therefore dynamic and self-developing."

Modern European thought has made it clear that from the individual to the "unified state," it is one continuous process of real and natural growth. Sovereignty (Swaraj) is a relative notion. "The individual is sovereign over himself"—attains his Swaraj—"in so far as he can develop, control and unify his manifold nature." From the individual we come to "integrated neighbourhood" which is the real foundation of the unified state which again in its turn gives us the true ideal of the world-state. This integrated neighbourhood is great deal more than the mere physical contiguity of the people who live in the neighbourhood area. It requires the evolution of what has been called neighbourhood "consciousness." In other words, the question is: "How can the force generated by the neighbourhood life become part of our whole civic and national life?" It is this question which now democracy takes upon itself to solve.

The process prescribed is the generation of the collective will. The democracy which obtains to-day rests on an attempt of securing a common will by a process of addition. This really means a war of wills, the issue being left to be decided by a mere superiority of numbers. New democracy discountenances this process of addition, and insists on the discovery of detailed means and methods by which the different wills of a neighbourhood entity may grow into one common collective will. This process is not a process of addition but of integration, and the consciousness of the neighbourhood thus awakened must express the common collective will of that neighbourhood entity. The collective wills of the several neighbourhood centres, must by a similar process of integration be allowed to evolve the common collective will of the whole nation. It is only thus, by a similar process of integration that any league of nations may be real and the vision of a world state may be realized.

The whole of this philosophy is based on the idea of the evolution of individual. The idea is to "release the powers of the individual." Ordinary notions of state have little to do with true individualism, *i.e.*, "with the individual as consciously responsible for the life from which he draws his breath and to which he contributes his all. According to this school of thought "representative Government, party organisation, majority rule with all their excrescences are dead-wood. In their stead must appear the organisation of non-partisan groups for the begetting, the bringing into being of common ideas, a common purpose and the collective will." This means the true development and extension of the individual self. The institutions that exist to-day have made machines of men. No Government will be successful, no true Government is possible which does not rest on the individual. "Up to the present moment," says the gifted authoress of the New State :

> we have never seen the individual yet. The search for him has been the whole long striving of our Anglo-Saxon history. We sought him through the method of representation and failed to find him. We sought to reach him by extending the suffrage to every

man and then to every woman and yet he eludes us. Direct Government now seeks the individual.

In another place, the same writer says :

Thus group organisation releases us from the domination of mere numbers, thus democracy transcends time and space. It can never be understood except as a spiritual force. Majority rule rests on numbers ; democracy rests on the well grounded assumption that society is not a collection of units, but a network of human relations. Democracy is not worked out at the polling booths ; it is the bringing forth of a genuine collective will, one to which every single being must contribute the whole of the complex life, as one which every single being must express the whole of it at one point. Thus the essence of democracy is creating. The technique of democracy is group organisation.

According to this school of thought no living state is possible without the development and the extension of the individual self. State itself is no static unit. Nor is it an arbitrary creation. " It is a process ; a continual self-modification to express its different stages of growth in which each and all must be so flexible that continual change of form is twin-fellow of continual growth." This can only be realised when there is a clear perception that individuals and groups and the nation stand in no antithesis. The integration of all these into one conscious whole means and must necessarily mean the integration of the wills of individuals into the common and collective will of the entire nation.

The general trend of European thought has not accepted the ideal of this new democracy. But the present problems which are agitating Europe seem to offer no other solution. I have very little doubt that this ideal which appears to many practical politicians as impracticable will be accepted as the real ideal at no distant future. " There is little yet," I again quote from the same author, " that is practical in practical politics."

The fact is that all the progressive movements in Europe have suffered because of the want of a really spiritual basis and it is refreshing to find that this writer has seized upon it. To those who think that the

neighbhourhood group is too puny to serve as a real foundation of self-Government, she says :

> Is our daily life profane and only so far as we rise out of it do we approach the sacred life? Then no wonder politics are what they have become. But this is not the creed of men to-day; we believe in the sacredness of our life ; we believe that divinity is for ever incarnating in humanity, and so we believe in Humanity and the common daily life of all men.

There is thus a great deal of correspondence between this view of life and the view which I have been endeavouring to place before my countrymen for the last 15 years. For the truth of all truths, is that the outer *Leela* of God reveals itself in history. Individual, Society, Nation, Humanity are the different aspects of that very *Leela* and scheme of Self-Government which is practically true and which is really practical can be based on any other Philosophy of life. It is the realisation of this truth which is the supreme necessity of the hour. This is the soul of Indian thought, and this the ideal towards which the recent thought of Europe is slowly but surely advancing.

To frame such a scheme of Government regard must, therefore, be had—

(1) to the formation of local centres more or less on the lines of the ancient village system of India.

(2) the growth of larger and larger groups out of integration of these village centres.

(3) the unifying state should be the result of similar growth.

(4) the village centres and the larger groups must be practically autonomous.

(5) the residuary power of control must remain in the Central Government but the exercise of such power should be exceptional and for that purpose proper safeguard should be provided, so that the practical autonomy of the local centres may be maintained and at the same time the growth of the Central Government into a really unifying state may be possible. The ordinary work of such Central Government should be mainly advisory.

As a necessary corollary to what I have ventured to suggest as the form of Government which we should accept, I think that the work of organising these local centres should be forthwith commenced. The modern sub-divisions or even smaller units may be conveniently taken as the local centres, and larger centres may be conveniently formed. Once we have our local areas — " the neighbourhood group "—we should foster the habit of corporate thinking, and leave all local problems to be worked out by them. There is no reason why we should not start the Government by these local centres to-day. They would depend for their authority on the voluntary co-operation of the people, and voluntary co-operation is much better than the compulsory co-operation which is at the bottom of the Bureaucratic rule in India. This is not the place to elaborate the scheme which I have in mind ; but I think that is essentially necessary to appoint a Committee with power, not only to draw up a scheme of Government but to suggest means by which the scheme can be put in operation at once.

BOYCOTT OF COUNCIL

The next item of work to which I desire to refer is the boycott of Councils. Unhappily the question has become part of the controversy of Change or No-change. To my mind the whole controversy proceeds on a somewhat erroneous assumption. The question is not so much as to whether there should be a change in the programme of the work ; the real question is whether it is not necessary now to change the direction of our activities in certain respects for the success of the very movement which we hold so dear. Let me illustrate what I mean. Take the Bardoli Resolution. In the matter of boycott of schools and colleges, the Bardoli Resolution alters the direction of our activity, which does not in any way involve the abandonment of the boycott. During the Swaraj year the idea was to bring the students out of Government schools and colleges, and if National schools were started they were regarded as concessions to the " weakness " of those students. The idea was, to quote the words of Mahatma

Gandhi, "political" and not "educational." Under the Bardoli Resolution, however, it is the establishment of schools and colleges which must be the main activity of national education. The idea is "educational," and if it still be the desire of the Congress to bring students out of Government schools and colleges, it is by offering them educational advantages. Here the boycott of schools and colleges is still upheld, but the direction of our activities is changed. In fact, such changes must occur in every revolution, violent or non-violent, as it is only by such changes that the ideal is truly served.

In the next place, we must keep in view the fact that according to unanimous opinion of the members of the Enquiry Committee, Civil Disobedience on a large scale is out of question because the people are not prepared for it.

I confess that I am not in favour of the restrictions which have been put upon the practical adoption of any system of civil disobedience, and in my opinion, the Congress should abolish those restrictions. I have not yet been able to understand why to enable a people to civilly disobey particular laws, it should be necessary that at least 80 per cent. of them should be clad in pure "Khadi." I am not much in favour of general Mass Civil Disobedience. To my mind, the idea is impracticable. But the disobedience of particular laws which are eminently unlawful, laws which are the creatures of "Law and Order," laws which are alike an outrage on humanity and an insult to God—disobedience of such laws is within the range of practical politics and in my opinion, every attempt should be made to offer disobedience to such laws. It is only by standing on truth that the cause of Swaraj may prevail. When we submit to such laws, we abandon the plank of truth. What hope is there for a nation so dead to the sense of truth as not to rebel against lawless laws, against regulations which insure their national being and hamper their national development ?

I am of opinion that the question of the boycott of Council which is agitating the country so much must be

considered and decided in the light of the circumstances I have just mentioned. There is no opposition in idea between such civil disobedience as I have mentioned and the entry into the Councils for the purpose, and with the avowed object of either ending or mending them. I am not against the boycott of Councils. I am simply of opinion that the system of the Reformed Councils with their steel frame of the Indian Civil Service covered over by a dyarchy of deadlocks and departments, is absolutely unsuitable to the nature and genius of the Indian nation. It is an attempt of the British Parliament to force a foreign system upon the Indian people. India has unhesitatingly refused to recognise this foreign system is a real foundation for Swaraj. With me, as I have often said, it is not a question of more or less; I am always prepared to sacrifice much for a real basis of Swaraj, nor do I attach any importance to the question as to whether the attainment of full and complete independence will be a matter of 7 years or 10 years or 20 years. A few years is nothing in the life history of a nation. But I maintain that India cannot accept a system such as this as a foundation of our Swaraj. These Councils must therefore be either mended or ended. Hitherto we have been boycotting the Councils from outside. We have succeeded in doing much—the prestige of the Councils is diminished, and the country knows that the people who adorn those chambers are not the true representatives of the people. But though we have succeeded in doing much, these Councils are still there. It should be the duty of the Congress to boycott the Councils more effectively from within. Reformed Councils are really a mask which the Bureaucracy has put on. I conceive it to be our clear duty to tear this mask from off their face. The very idea of boycott implies, to my mind, something more than mere withdrawal. The boycott of foreign goods means that such steps must be taken that there may be no foreign goods in our markets. The boycott of the Reformed Councils, to my mind, means that such steps must be taken that these Councils may not be there to impede

the progress of Swaraj. The only successful boycott of these Councils is either to mend them in a manner suitable to the attainment of Swaraj or to end them completely. That is the way in which I advise the nation to boycott the Councils.

A great deal of discussion has taken place in the country as to whether the boycott of Councils in the sense in which I mean it, is within the principle of non-violent non-co-operation. I am emphatically of opinion that it does not offend against any principle of non-co-operation which has been adopted and applied by the Indian National Congress. I am not dealing with logical or philosophical abstractions. I am only dealing with that which the Congress has adopted and called non-co-operation. In the first place may I point out that we have not up to now non-co-operated with the Bureaucracy? We have been merely preparing the people of this country to offer non-co-operation. Let me quote the Nagpur resolution on non-co-operation in support of my proposition. I am quoting only the portions which are relevant to this point:

> Whereas in the opinion of the Congress the existing Government of India has forfeited the confidence of the country, and, whereas the people of India are now determined to establish Swaraj . . . . now this Congress . . . . declare that the entire or any part or parts of the scheme of non-violent non-co-operation with the renunciation of voluntary association with the present Government at one end, and the refusal to pay taxes at the other, should be put into force at a time to be determined by either the Indian National Congrsss, or the All-India Congress Committee and that, *in the meanwhile to prepare the country for it, effective steps should continue to be taken in that behalf.*

Then follows the effective steps such as, national education, boycott of law courts, boycott of foreign goods, etc., which must be taken in the meanwhile. It is clear therefore that the Congress has not yet advocated the application of non-co-operation but has merely recommended certain steps to be taken, so that, at some time or other, to be determined by the Congress, the Indian nation may offer non-co-operation. In the second place, let us judge of the character of this principle, not by thinking any of

logical idea or philosophical abstraction, but by gathering the principle from the work and the activity which the Congress has enjoined. When I survey that work, it is clear to my mind, that the Congress was engaged in a twofold activity. In everything that the Congress commanded there is an aspect of destruction as there is an aspect of creation. The boycott of lawyers and law courts means the destruction of existing legal institutions; and the formation of Panchayats means the creation of agencies through which justice may be administered. The boycott of schools and colleges means the destruction of the department of Education; and the establishment of National schools and colleges means the creation of educational institutions for the youth of India. The boycott of foreign goods followed as it was by the burning of foreign cloth means the destruction of the foreign goods already in the country and the preventing, in future, of foreign goods coming into the country. But on the other hand, the spinning wheel and the looms means creative activity in supplying the people with indigenous cloth. Judged by this principle, what is wrong about the desire either to convert the Councils into institutions which may lead us to Swaraj, or to destroy them altogether? The same twofold aspect of creation and destruction is to be found in the boycott of Councils in the way I want them to be boycotted.

It has also been suggested that it offends against the morality and spirituality of this movement. Let us take the two points separately. As regards the question of morality apart from the ethics of Non-Co-operation, it has been urged that entering the Councils for the purpose of ending the Councils is unfair and dishonest. The argument implies that the Reformed Councils belong entirely to the Bureaucracy and the idea is that we should not enter into other people's property with a view to injure it. To my mind, the argument is based on a misconception of facts. Inadequate as the Reforms undoubtedly are, I do not for a moment admit that the Reforms Act was a gift of the British Parliament. It was,

to quote the words of Mahatma Gandhi, "a concession to popular agitation." The fact is that it is the resultant of two contending forces : the desire of the people for freedom and the desire of the Bureaucracy to oppose such desire. The result is that it has travelled along lines neither entirely popular nor entirely bureaucratic. The people of India do not like these Reforms, but let us not forget that the Bureaucracy does not like them either. Because it is the result of two contending forces pulling in different directions the Reforms have assumed a tortured shape. But so far as the rights recognised are concerned, they are our rights—our property —and there is nothing immoral or unfair or dishonest in making use of the rights which the people have extorted from the British Parliament. If the fulfilment of the very forces which have succeeded in securing the Reforms require that the Councils should either be mended or ended, if the struggle for freedom compels the adoption of either course, what possible charge of immorality can be levelled against it? I admit if we had proposed to enter the Councils stealthily with the avowed object of co-operation but keeping within our hearts the desire to break the Councils, such a course would undoubtedly have been dishonest. European diplomacy, let us hope, has been abolished by the Indian National Congress under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. If we play now, we play with all our cards on the table.

But some people say that it is immoral from the point of view of non-co-operation, because it involves an idea of destruction. The work of non-co-operation according to these patriots—I have the highest reverence for them—is only to build our national life ignoring altogether the existence of the Bureaucracy. It may be an honest ideal, and logically speaking, it may be the inner meaning of non-co-operation. But the non-co-operation which the Congress has followed is not so logical and I claim that if the principle of non-co-operation is to be advanced as a test of my programme, let it be the same principle which the Congress has accepted, adopted and applied. As I

have already said, that principle countenances destruction as well as creation. As a matter of fact, circumstanced as we are with the Bureaucracy to the right and the Bureaucracy to the left, Bureaucracy all round us, it is impossible to create without destroying; nor must it be forgotten that if we break, it is only that we may build.

It has also been suggested that the very entry into the Councils is inconsistent with the ideal of non-co-operation. I confess I do not understand the argument. Supposing the Congress had sanctioned an armed insurrection, could it be argued that entry into the fort of the Bureaucracy is consistent with the principle of the non-co-operation? Surely the charge of inconsistency must depend on the subject of the entry. An advancing army does not co-operate with the enemy when it marches into the enemy's territory. Co-operation or non-co-operation must therefore depend on the object with which such entry is made. The argument, if analysed, comes to this that whenever the phrase "entry into Councils" is used it calls up the association of co-operation, and then the mere idea of this entry is proclaimed to be inconsistent with non-co-operation. But this is the familiar logical fallacy of our terms. Entry into the Council to co-operate with the Government and entry into the Councils to non-co-operate with the Government are two terms and two different propositions. The former is inconsistent with the idea of non-co-operation, the latter is absolutely consistent with that very idea.

Next let us understand the opposition from the point of view of the spirituality of our movement. The question of spirituality is not to be confused with the dictates of any particular religion. I am not aware of the injunctions of any religion against entering the Councils with a view either to mend them or end them. I have heard from many Mahomedans that the Koran lays down no such injunction. Other Mahomedan friends have told me that there may be some difficulty on that ground, but that is a matter with regard to which I am not competent to speak. The Khilafat must answer that question with such

assistance as they may obtain from the Ulemas. It is needless to point out that should the Ulemas come to the conclusion that under the present circumstances it would be an offence against their religion to enter the Councils, the Congress should unhesitatingly accept their decision, because no work in this country towards the attainment of Swaraj is possible without the hearty co-operation of both Hindus and Mussulmans. But I am dealing with that spirituality which does not affect any particular creed or any particular religion. Judged from the standpoint of such spirituality what objection can there be in removing from our path by all legitimate means any obstacle to the attainment of Swaraj? We burned foreign cloth without a scruple, and the spirituality of the movement did not receive a shock when we burned them. It is as well to start with a clear conception as to what that spiritually is. Apart from any creedal or doctrinal injunction and apart from any question of morality the basis of spirituality must be the attainment of freedom and of Swaraj. What is the duty which every human being owes not only to his race, not only to his nation, not only to humanity but also to his God? It is the right to fulfil oneself. It is the duty of living in the light of God. Shortly after my release from imprisonment I said in a public speech that all our national activities should be based on truth. Ever since that day questions and conundrums have been put to me. I have been asked to define what is truth. It has also been suggested that because I dared not tell the truth that I took refuge under the general expression. I still insist that our national activities must be based on truth. I repeat that I do not believe in politics, or in making water-tight compartments of our national life which is an indivisible organic whole. I repeat that as you cannot define life, you cannot define truth. The test of truth is not logical definition. The test of truth lies in its all-compelling force in making itself felt. You know truth when you have felt it. God cannot be defined, nor can truth, because truth is the revelation of God. Two thousand years ago, a jesting judge asked the same question of the Son of God. He

made no answer by word of mouth; but he sacrificed himself and Truth was revealed. When I speak of spirituality I speak of the same truth. I look upon history as the revelation of God. I look upon human individual personality, nationality and humanity each contributing to the life of the other as the revelation of God to man. I look upon the attainment of freedom and Swaraj the only way of fulfilling oneself as individuals, as nations. I look upon all national activities as the real foundation of the service of that greater humanity which again is the revelation of God to man. The Son of God brought to the world not peace but a sword—not the peace of death and immorality and corruptions but the "separating sword" of Truth. We have to fight against all corruptions and all immorality. It is only thus that freedom can be attained. Whatever obstacles there may be in the path of Swaraj either of the individual or of the nation, or humanity at large, these obstacles must be removed by the individual if he desires his freedom, by the nation if that nation desires to fulfil itself, by all the nations of the world if the cause of humanity is to prosper. That being the spirituality of the movement as I understand it, I am prepared to put away all obstacles that lie between the Indian nation and the attainment of its freedom, not stealthily but openly, reverently in the name of truth and God. Judged from this ideal of spirituality, the entry into the Councils for the purpose I have stated is necessary to advance the cause of truth. Everything in connection with this controversy must be judged by that standard.

At present the question before the country put by those members of the Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee who are in favour of Council entry is simply that the members of the Congress should stand as candidates. It is unnecessary therefore to go into other questions raised, such as in the matter of taking oath, the probability or otherwise of securing a majority and so on. With regard to the question of oath all that I need say at present is this, that apart from the dictates of any particular religion

which I do not propose to deal with, the question does not present any difficulty at all. The oath is a constitutional one. The king stands for the constitution. Great changes in constitution have taken place in England under that very oath. Now, what is the oath? It binds those who take it—first not to make any use of powers which are not allowed by the Reforms Act; secondly to discharge their duties faithfully. So far as the first point is concerned, there is nothing in my suggestion which militates against it. So far as the second point is concerned, I am aware that a forced interpretation has been sought to be put upon it, namely, that a member taking the oath is bound to discharge his duties faithfully to the Bureaucracy. All that I need say is, that there is no constitutional authority of any kind to justify that interpretation. To my mind, the words mean a faithful discharge of a member's duties to his constituency by the exercise of powers recognised under the Reforms Act. I do not therefore understand what possible objection there may be to take the oath. But there again the question does not arise at present.

Various other questions have been asked as to whether it is possible to secure a majority and as to what we should do supposing we are in a majority. I think it possible that having regard to the present circumstances of the country, the Non-Co-operators are likely to get the majority. I am aware of the difficulty of the franchise, I am aware of the rules which prevent many of us from entering the Councils; but making every allowances for all these difficulties, I believe that we shall be in the majority. But here also the question doesn't arise till we meet in the Congress of 1923 when the matter may be discussed not on suppositions but on actualities.

As regards the question as to what we should do if we have the majority, the answer is clear. We should begin our proceedings by a solemn declaration of the existence of our inherent right, and by a formal demand for a constitution which would recognise and conserve those rights and give effect to our claims for the particular system of Government which we may choose for ourselves. If our

demands are accepted, then the fight is over. But as I have often said, if it is conceded that we are entitled to have that form of Government which we may choose for ourselves, and the real beginning is made with that particular form of Government in view, then it matters nothing to me whether the complete surrender of power is made to us to-day, or in five years or even in twenty years. If, however, our demand is not given effect to, we must non-co-operate with the Bureaucracy by opposing each and every work of the Council. We must disallow the entire Budget. We must move the adjournment of the House on every possible occasion ; and defeat every Bill that may be introduced. In fact we must so proceed that the Council will refuse to do any work unless and until our demands are satisfied. I am aware of the large powers of certification which Governors can exercise under the Reforms Act. But Government by certification is just as impossible as Government by veto. Such procedure may be adopted on a few occasions. The time must soon come when the Bureaucracy must yield or withdraw the Reforms Act. In either case it is a distinct triumph for the nation, and either course if adopted by the Bureaucracy will bring us nearer to the realisation of our ideal.

Another question is often asked : suppose we end these Reformed Councils—what then ? Could not the same question be asked with regard to every step the Congress has hitherto undertaken in the way of breaking, of destroying institutions. If we had succeeded in destroying the Educational Department, might not somebody ask—what then ? If we had succeeded in destroying the legal institutions, might not the question be put with equal relevance ? The fact is, destruction itself will never bring us Swaraj. The fact further is that no construction is possible without destruction. We must not forget that it is not this activity or that activity which by itself can bring Swaraj. It is the totality of our national activity in the way of destruction and in the way of creation, that will bring Swaraj. If we succeed in demolishing these Reformed Councils, you will find the

whole nation astir with life. Let them put other obstacles in our way; we shall remove them with added strength and greater vitality.

It has also been suggested that the Bureaucracy will never allow the Non-Co-operators to enter the Councils,—they will alter the rules to prevent such entry. I cannot conceive of anything better calculated to strengthen the cause of non-co-operation than this. If any such rule is framed I should welcome it and again change the direction of our activity. The infant nation in India requires constant struggle for its growth and development. We must not forget that a great non-violent revolution is on the land, and we shall change the direction of our activities as often as circumstances require it. To-day the Councils are open and we must attack them,—to-morrow if the Councils are closed, we must be prepared to deal with the contingency when it arises. What do we do when it pours with rain? We turn our umbrella in the direction from which the water comes. It is in the same way that we must turn the direction of our activities whenever the fulfilment of our national life demands it.

The work of the Councils for the last two years has made it necessary for non-co-operators to enter the Councils. The Bureaucracy has received added strength from these Reformed Councils, and those who have entered the Councils speaking generally, have practically helped the cause of Bureaucracy. What is most necessary to consider is the fact that the taxation has increased by leaps and bounds. The expenditure of the Government of India has grown enormously since the pre-War year 1913-14. In that year the total expenditure of the Government of India amounted to 79 crores and 37 lakhs; in 1919-20, it rose to 138 crores, and in 1920-21, the first year of the reformed system of administration, it stood at 149 crores. The expenses of the current year are likely to be even higher. To meet the successive increases in expenditure, additional taxation was levied in 1916-17, 1917-18, 1919-20, 1921-22, and 1922-23. We may prepare ourselves for proposals for further additional taxation in the

ensuing year. Inspite of the levy of additional taxation, seven out of the last nine years have been years of deficit.

The increase in military expenditure is chiefly responsible for the present financial situation. In 1913-14, the expenses of this department amounted to about 31½ crores, in 1919-20, after the conclusion of the War they mounted up to 87½ crores, and in 1920-21, they stood at 88½ crores. As Sir Visvesvaraya remarks, the expenses under the head "Civil Administration" also have shown a perpetual tendency to increase. As a part and parcel of the Reform Scheme, the emoluments of the members of the Indian Civil Service, the Indian Educational Service, the Indian Medical Service and of all the other services recruited in England have been enormously increased; and to maintain some kind of fairness the salaries of the subordinate services which are manned by Indians have also been increased.

The financial situation in the provinces is not much better. Under the financial arrangements of the Reform Scheme, the provinces of India, taken together, secured an accession to their resources of about 11 crores of rupees. Beside the provinces had between them in 1920-21 a total accumulated balance of 21 crores and 68 lakhs. But so great has been the increase in provincial expenditure during the last two years that even those provinces which had hoped to realise large surpluses are now on the verge of bankruptcy. In the first year of the reform era most of the provinces were faced with deficits and were just able to tide over their financial difficulties by drawing upon their balances. But in the current year, the financial situation in many of the provinces has become worse. The Burma budget shows a deficit of 1 crore and 90 lakhs, the Punjab 1 crore and 30 lakhs, Behar and Orissa 51 lakhs, Madras 41 lakhs, the United Provinces 27 lakhs, the Central Provinces 37 lakhs. The deficit of the Madras Government would have been much higher had it not taken steps to increase its revenues by Rs. 77½ lakhs from fresh taxation. The Bengal statement shows an estimated surplus owing

to the remission of the Provincial contribution to the Central Government and expected receipts from fresh taxation amounting to 1 crore and 40 lakhs. But it is very doubtful if the expectation will be realised early next year, and further fresh taxes are likely to be imposed. Assam has budgetted for a deficit of 14½ lakhs after the imposition of additional taxation. Proposals for further taxation are under consideration in the Punjab, Behar and Orissa, the Central Provinces and Assam. In the United Provinces, the proposals brought forward by the Government were rejected by the Legislative Council.

I warn my countrymen against the policy of allowing these Reformed Councils to work their wicked will. There will undoubtedly be a further increase of taxation and there is an apprehension in my mind. I desire to express it with all the emphasis that I can command, that if we allow this policy of drift to continue, the result will be that we shall lose the people who are with us to-day. Let us break the Councils if the Bureaucracy does not concede to the demands of the people. If there is fresh taxation, as it is bound to be, let the responsibility be on the Bureaucracy. Then you and I and the people will jointly fight the powers that be.

LABOUR ORGANISATION

I am further of opinion that the Congress should take up the work of Labour and Peasant organisation. With regard to labour there is a resolution of the Nagpur Congress, but I am sorry to say that it has not been acted upon. There is an apprehension in the minds of some non-co-operators that the cause of non-co-operation will suffer if we exploit Labour for Congress purposes. I confess again I do not understand the argument. The word "exploitation" has got an ugly association, and the argument assumes that Labour and Peasants are not with us in this struggle of Swaraj. I deny the assumption. My experience has convinced me that Labour and the Peasantry of India to-day are, if anything, more eager to attain Swaraj than the so-called

middle and educated classes. If we are "exploiting" boys of tender years and students of colleges, if we are "exploiting" the women of India, if we are "exploiting" the whole of the middle classes irrespective of their creed and caste and occupation, may I ask what justification is there for leaving out Labourers and the Peasants? I suppose the answer is that they are welcome to be the members of the Congress Committees but that there should not be a separate organisation of them. But Labour has got a separate interest and they are often oppressed by a foreign capitalist, and the Peasantry of India is often oppressed by a class of men who are the standard-bearers of the Bureaucracy. Is the service of this special interest in any way antagonistic to the service of nationalism? To find bread for the poor to secure justice to the class of people who are engaged in a particular trade or avocation—how is that work any different from the work of attaining Swaraj. Anything which strengthens the national cause, anything which supports the masses of India is surely as much a matter of Swaraj as any other item of work which the Congress has in hand. My advice is that the Congress should lose no time in appointing a Committee, a strong workable Committee, to organise Labour and the Peasantry of India. We have delayed the matter already too long. If the Congress fails to do its duty, you may expect to find organisations set up in the country by Labourers and Peasants detached from you dissociated from the cause of Swaraj which will inevitably bring within the arena of the peaceful revolution class struggles and the war of special interests. If the object of the Congress be to avoid that disgraceful issue let us take Labour and the Peasantry in hand, and let us organise them both from the point of view of their own special interest and also from the point of view of the higher ideal which demands satisfaction of their special interests and the devotion of such interest to the cause of Swaraj. Here again we have to make use of the very selfishness of Labourers and Peasants as we know that the fulfilment of that very selfishness requires its just and proper contribution to the life of the nation.

WORK ALREADY TAKEN UP

I now turn to the work which the Congress has already taken up. I may at once point out that it is not my desire that any work which the Congress has taken up should be surrendered. The change of direction which I advocate and the other practical change which I have mentioned is not by way of surrendering anything that is already on the plank—but it is simply by way of addition.

BOYCOTT OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

I am firmly of opinion that the boycott of schools and colleges should be carried on as effectively as before. I differ from the Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee when they propose the abandonment of the withdrawal of boys from such Schools and Colleges. The question to my mind is of vital importance. It is on the youth of the country that the cause of Swaraj largely depends and what chance is there for a nation which willingly, knowingly sends its boys and its young men to Schools and Colleges to be stamped with the stamp of slavery and foreign culture ? I do not desire to enter into the question more minutely. I have expressed my views on the subject so often that I find it unnecessary to repeat them. I however agree with the recommendations of the Enquiry Committee that National Schools and Colleges should also be started.

BOYCOTT OF LAW COURTS AND LAWYERS

With regard to the question of the boycott of lawyers and legal institutions, I agree with the main recommendations of the Committee. Many questions have been raised as to whether the right of defence should be allowed or not, and on what occasions, and for what purposes. I have never been in love with formal rules and I think it impossible to frame rules which will cover all the circumstances which may arise in particular cases. All that I desire to insist on, is the keeping in view of the principle of the boycott of courts.

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

With regard to the question of Hindu-Muslim unity, untouchability and such matters, I agree with the recommendation of the Enquiry Committee. I desire to point out, however, that true unity of all sections of the Indian nation can only be based on a proper co-operation and the recognition by each section of the rights of the others—that is why I propose that there should be a compact between the different sections, between different communities of India. We will do little good to the section known as Untouchables if we approach them in a spirit of superiority. We must engage them in the work before us and we must work with them side by side and shoulder to shoulder.

KHADDAR

I now come to the question of Khaddar which I regard as one of the most important questions before us. As I have already said, I am opposed to the manufacture of Khaddar on a commercial basis. I said among other things when I seconded the Bezwada resolution on the 31st of March 1921 proposed by Mahatma Gandhi :

" Our reason in asking the people to take to the Charkha was not based upon any desire to enter into any competition with foreign capitalist production either from without or from within. Our idea is to enable the people to understand and fashion for themselves their economic life and utilize the spare time of their families and opportunities with a view to create more economic goods for themselves and improve their own condition." The idea is to make the people of this country self-contained. This work is difficult but essential and should be carried on with all our strength. I would much rather that few families were self-contained than factories were started on a large scale. Such factories represent a short-sighted policy, and there is no doubt that though it would satisfy the present need, it will create an evil which it would be difficult to eradicate. I am naturally opposed to the creation of a new

Manchester in India of which we have and sufficient experience. Let us avoid that possibility, if we can.

It is often stated that Khaddar alone will bring us Swaraj. I ask my countrymen in what way is it possible for Khaddar to lead us to Swaraj? It is in one sense only that the statement may be true. We must regard Khaddar as the symbol of Swaraj. As the Khaddar makes us self-contained with regard to a very large department of our national life so it is hoped that the inspiration of Khaddar will make the whole of our national life self-contained and independent. This is the meaning of the symbol. To my mind, such symbol worship requires the spreading out of all non-co-operation activities in every possible direction. It is thus and only thus that the speedy attainment of Swaraj is possible.

CONCLUSION

It remains to me to deliver to you a last message of hope and confidence. There is no royal road to Freedom, and dark and difficult will be the path leading to it. But dauntless is your courage, and firm your resolution; and though there will be reverses, they will only have the effect of speeding your emancipation from the bondage of a foreign government. Do not make the mistake of confusing achievement with success. Achievement is an appearance and appearances are often deceptive. I contend that, though we cannot point to a great deal as the solid achievement of the movement, the success of it is assured. That success was proclaimed by the Bureaucracy in the repeated attempts which were made, and are still being made, to crush the growth of the movement, and to arrest its progress, in the refusal to repeal some of the most obnoxious of the repressive legislations, in the frequent use that has been made of the arbitrary or discretionary authority that is vested in the executive government, and in sending to prison our beloved leader who offered himself as a sacrifice to the wrath of the Bureaucracy. But though the ultimate success of the movement is assured, I warn you that the issue depends wholly on you, and on how you conduct yourselves in

meeting the forces that are arrayed against you. Christianity rose triumphant when Jesus of Nazareth offered himself as a sacrifice to the excessive worship of law and order by the Scribes and the Pharisees. The forces that are arrayed against you are the forces, not only of the Bureaucracy, but of the modern Scribes and Pharisees whose interest it is to maintain the Bureaucracy in all its pristine glory. Be it yours to offer yourselves as sacrifices in the interest of truth and justice, so that your children's children may have the fruit of your sufferings. Be it yours to wage a spiritual warfare so that the victory, when it comes, does not debase you, nor tempt you to retain the power of Government in your own hands. But if yours is to be a spiritual warfare, your weapons must be those of the spiritual soldier. Anger is not for you, hatred is not for you: nor for you is pettiness, meanness or falsehood. For you is the hope of dawn and the confidence of the morning, and for you is the song that was sung of Titan, chained and imprisoned, but the Champion of Man, in the Greek fable:

> To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;
> To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;
> To defy Power, which seems omnipotent;
> To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates
> From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;
> Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;
> This, like thy glory, Titan is to be
> Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;
> This is alone Life, Joy, Empire and Victory.

Thirty eighth Congress—Cocanada—1923

MOULANA MOHAMED ALI

FRIENDS AND FELLOW-WORKERS,—It has been the custom for every occupant of the Presidential Chair of the Indian National Congress to thank the delegates that have conferred on him the highest honour it is in the power of the Indian nation to confer on an Indian. It has also been customary for him to disclaim that his merits deserved such signal honour and to declare his unfitness to rank with those that had previously occupied the Presidential Chair. I have no doubt that the innate modesty of my predecessors infused into these disclaimers and declarations a sincerity that saved them from the banality of mere conventions. But it is no such modesty that makes me further stale them by repetition. When two years ago, just on the eve of my imprisonment, a few of the Provinces had honoured me also with their nominations, I was still in a position to withdraw my name and to give at least partial expression to the shock of surprise I felt on that occasion. This time, however, fate had taken the matter almost entirely out of my hands; for soon after I was discharged from prison, I received from the Reception Committee here the telegraphic message that in a few days it would meet to put the seal of its agreement on the choice of the Provincial Congress Committees.

Believe me, if the circumstances that had led to the special Session at Delhi, and, still more, if that session itself had not revealed to me conditions that made the withdrawal of my name something in the nature of desertion, I would have withdrawn it even at that late stage. I consider it a presumption to preside here, and one reason for my reluctance and hesitation must be

obvious to all. It must be remembered that my association with the Indian National Congress is of very recent date. It was only in 1919 that for the first time I attended the Congress as a delegate, and then, too, my participation was not in the ordinary course. As some of you may remember, my brother and I had just been released from confinement as State Prisoners in the Betul gaol in which our internment during the last four years of the War had culminated. We had, of course, proceeded straight to the Congress that had already commenced its session in martyred Amritsar, and since we could not have been elected as delegates in the usual way, the good people of Amritsar had forthwith adopted us as their own. The Nagpur Session that was held in the following year was the first, and, as it happened, also the only one previous to this which my brother and I attended as delegates elected in the ordinary course. Those who had hitherto occupied the Presidential Chair had been veterans that had grown grey in the service of the Congress. Can it, therefore, be merely conventional if one who is after all among the babes and sucklings of the Congress thanks you for such an unusual mark of your favour?

The only consideration which could justify this favour was that, although my association with the Congress was recent, it was coupled with my association with one of the very greatest, if also one of the latest Congressmen, one whom all eyes search in vain in this Pandal to-day. Ever since I first attended a session of the Congress as a delegate in 1919, his had been the one dominating personality. More than ever we need our great chief, Mahatma Gandhi, to-day; and if God has willed that in his place one of his humblest followers, though not the least loving among them, should assist you in your deliberations, I can only feel what the Arab poet felt when he wistfully wrote :

The death of great ones made us great !

But although the man who was most responsible for Mahatma Gandhi's incarceration hoped that by burying him alive, as he called it, he would kill the spirit that the

Mahatma had infused into the nation, I feel certain that it lives just as surely as the Mahatma lives himself. Relying on God's assistance, and on your own kind indulgence, which, I think, I may with confidence bespeak, I invoke that spirit to-day, in the hope that with its aid I may prove not altogether unworthy of the high office to which your suffrage has all too generously called me.

Friends, the only one who can lead you is the one who had led you at Amritsar, at Calcutta, at Nagpur and at Ahmedabad, though each session of the Congress had its own elected President. Our generalissimo is to-day a prisoner of war in the hands of the enemy, and none can fill the void that his absence from our midst has caused. As for myself, I am but a comrade whom your loving kindness has called out from the ranks, and I plead for its continuance not only during the discussions of this session, but also throughout the year in which I am required by your constitution to assist you as your President.

THE FUNCTION OF THE PRESIDENT

On one point, however, you too are entitled to an assurance from me, and I offer it to you without hesitation. I have been a fighter all my life, and, of course, I have been in the habit of throwing all the vehemence of an impulsive and impetuous nature into my fights. But your choice of me as your President has robbed me of my freedom, and to regain that freedom, if for nothing else, I would have willingly foregone the great privilege of presiding on this occasion. However, in the cast you have assigned to me the unfamiliar role of the peace-maker, and even a fighter like me has to confess that, if anything is better than a fight, it is peace. I have, therefore, deprived myself of the opportunity to fight in order to help the cause of peace and unity, and I do not regret the surrender. As your President, I am here to serve you to the best of my power, and not in the capacity of a slave-driver, and if, in following the convention of political societies like yours,

I have to inagurate this session with an address, it is essentially in the spirit of a servant of yours that I do so, and not as a dictator. I am here to assist you to form judgments on the various issues that may come up for your decision, and, so far as it lies in the power of a fellow-worker and comrade of yours, I hope to help you to form only sound judgments, and to form them without waste of time, temper and energy. But these judgments must be yours, not mine; or, if you will, ours collectively in the truest sense. I have referred to the Mahatma's dominating personality, and we must admit how difficult it was to shake off his spell even for those rare individuals that desired to do so. I feel certain that Mahatma Gandhi neither asked, nor wanted anyone to surrender his judgment to him; and I have been told that just before his arrest he regretfully realised that quite a number of his followers and admirers, who had readily, and in all sincerity, signified their agreement with him, had failed to realize that they were offering their allegiance only to the man, and were not accepting his measures as well on the strength of their own clear conviction. It will be an impertinence for me even to disclaim any such influence as the Mahatma undoubtedly exercised over the people, and I am anxious that every vote cast on any side should be the result of the voter's own deliberate judgment, carrying with it the fullest individual responsibility. As for myself, if I kept back from you my own view of any matter of vital importance merely for fear that it might not be acceptable to you, I shall certainly not be serving you truly. For another thing it would not be consistent with true democracy. But we shall only be making a mockery of democracy if freedom was denied to the delegates of the Congress merely to please its President, or silence was imposed on the many just to secure the good will of the few.

CONGRESS SESSION NOT DIVISION LOBBY

Nevertheless, we have to understand that the country did not elect six thousand delegates, and we have not travelled to Cocanada from every corner of it as to division

lobbies, merely to cast our votes, and to register our individual judgments already formed before we set out on our journey. What good could we do to ourselves and to others if, like Omar the Tent-Maker Poet of Persia, we "evermore came out by the same door wherein we went"? If we do not wish to turn our journey into utter futility and and so much labour lost, the opinions we had formed, individually or in groups, before we started, must be tested here by comparison with the opinions of our fellow-delegates and influenced by them. And it is no shame, but, on the contrary, very often much to our credit, if we change our views in deference to the judgments of others whom we credit with greater sagacity or experience, or to the cumulative weight of the judgment of a large majority of people, although they be in no way superior to us as individuals, even though at the time itself we are not fully convinced that our own views are wrong. I am second to no man in my respect for deeply cherished convictions. But convictions are not on every occasion to be treated as matters of conscience, and I have the support here of Cromwell, one of the most conscientious statesmen, known to history, who used to implore his fellow-workers to remember that it was possible they might be mistaken.

PLEA FOR SELF-RESTRAINT AND ACCOMMODATION

Every delegate has the right to give expression to his views with perfect freedom, and to do so on as many questions as he likes. He has also the right to move as many resolutions as he pleases; to move amendments to as many resolutions proposed by others as he thinks fit; and to divide the house as frequently as he chooses. But no real work is possible if such rights are exercised without proper consideration for the opinion and convenience of others, and particularly without regard for the best interests of a distressed and distracted nation. Our great chief had often to deplore that the enthusiasm of our people in their assemblages lacked self-restraint and discipline, and, in truth, it was their innate peace-loving nature and their good humour that so often proved their saving grace. Self-restraint and discipline can be taught to the masses

only by such leaders as the Congress delegates and the self-restraint and discipline of the delegates themselves is the best guarantee of the self-restraint and discipline of the masses. Above all, I trust that in giving expression to our views, no matter how strong, we shall avoid such partisanship as feeds on malice and revels in violent recriminations. Our great chief is noted throughout the world for his gospel of Non-Violence, and it would be a sad commentary on our allegiance to one who would not tolerate violence in thought or word towards an enemy if we excluded from our boasted non-violence our best friends. I would not for the world change popular enthusiasm into quietism or indifference. We need discipline, not death. We must have the necessary steam to propel the national machinery; but it must be under proper control. Closely allied to this is the principle of compromise and accommodation. Ours is nothing if not a war of principles, and we cannot afford to forsake principles even for the sake of peace. But short of that we are being called upon by the state of our nation to-day to make every sacrifice in order to accommodate those who are as staunch nationalists as ourselves, but who do not always see eye to eye with us. It is our particular distinction that our great chief has spiritualized politics, and we can no longer be content with a politics that is completely divorced from ethics. But in politics we may not always be able to secure the best. Life is one long second best, and there should be no bar against the second best if, by being content with it for the time being, we can carry large sections of the nation with us on the road to victory. Above all, let us not think of winning party victories when we have still to win the victory of freedom against slavery, and of justice against a whole nation's wrongs. Forgive me, friends, for this homiletic preface, but I think I owed it to you as well as to myself. And now let us begin.

THE MUSSALMANS AND THE CONGRESS

I have referred to the fact that my association with the Congress is of very recent date; but this admission is not merely personal. It involves the political history of

the community to which I belong, and if I give a brief outline of it to you, it is only for the purpose of elucidating a problem which is the most vital of all the problems we have to solve to-day. When, in 1885, some Indian leaders, assisted by their British sympathisers, founded the Indian National Congress, the Mussalmans of India did not participate in the movement except in a few individual cases. If their lack of Western education made them unfit to take part in a movement essentially that of the classes educated according to Western notions, their political temper made them an element that was not unlikely to prove dangerous to any political movement. They had already lost the rule of India, but the tradition of that rule had survived. This had increased the aversion they had always felt for the new type of education. The rule of India had finally passed from Muslim into English hands by slow and hardly perceptible degrees in the hundred years that intervened between the battle of Plassey and the Indian Mutiny; but the Mussalmans had not ceased to regard the new rulers of India as something very inferior to themselves in civilization and culture. This storm of ill will and disdain had been gathering force for a whole century, and was at last precipitated in 1857. The Mutiny began near Calcutta as an affair of the Indian army, but in the storm-centre of Delhi and of my own Province, where it had to be fought out if English rule was to continue in India, it soon attracted to itself many forms of discontent, and religion was inextricably mixed up with politics. Although so many Mussalmans had, at enormous risk to themselves, assisted the British at a time when hardly anyone could have predicted their eventual success with any degree of assurance, it was the Muslim aristocracy in those parts that suffered most from the terrible aftermath of the Mutiny. In fact, in its permanent results, even more than in some of its terrors, it could, without any great exaggeration, be compared to the social upheaval that the French Revolution meant to the old nobility of France. The remnants of Muslim aristocracy, deprived of all influence and of many of its possessions, certainly did not expect the

return of Muslim rule. Nevertheless, a whole generation of Mussalmans kept sullenly aloof from all contact with the culture of the new rulers of India which in their heart of hearts they still despised. They were in no mood to take advantage of the education provided by the Universities of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras, founded in the very year in which the Mutiny convulsed the regions which formed the political centre of Muslim India. It was a natural consequence of this attitude of Mussalmans who sulked in their tents that when, nearly thirty years later, a new generation of Indians, who owed their education to the English, inaugurated a political movement on Western lines, Indian Mussalmans should be unfit by lack of such education to participate in that movement. Nevertheless, the Congress which called itself "Indian" and "National" felt the need of Muslim participation, for it could not justify its title without it.

SYED AHMAD KHAN OPPOSES MUSLIM PARTICIPATION

Efforts were therefore made early enough to enlist Mussalmans as delegates. But at this juncture, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, the great pioneer of Western education among Mussalmans, stepped into the political arena, and in two historic speeches, one delivered at Lucknow on the 28th December, 1887, and the other at Meerut on the 16th March, 1888, decisively checked whatever signs the Mussalmans had shown of political activity in support of the Congress movement. It is by no means a difficult task to criticise those speeches, for they contained many fallacies to which no politically-minded Mussalman could subscribe to-day. But I am not one of those who declare, merely on the strength of some ill-advised expressions characteristic of so militant a controversialist as Syed Ahmed Khan, that he was opposed to the co-operation of Hindus and Mussalmans.

THE TRUE NATURE AND MOTIVES OF HIS OPPOSITION

Although his own public career after retirement from Public Service was identified with a movement for the u plift of his own community, he was a good Indian as well

as a good Muslim, and many of his speeches prove him to have been an ardent patriot inspired with the love of Indian unity. And those who knew him personally can testify to the staunchness of his friendship with many Hindus, which could not have survived the narrow prejudices of which he has sometimes been accused.

No more true is the charge that he was opposed to Muslim participation in politics for all time. Whatever arguments he may have used in the two political utterances to which I have referred, to convince his Muslim hearers, there were two arguments, and two only, that had obviously convinced Syed Ahmad Khan himself of the undesirability of Muslim participation in the Congress at the time. He realised to the full that nothing would suit the temper of the Mussalmans of his day better than the vocation of critics of their British supplanters in the governance of India; and he also realised that such a pursuit would be as dangerous to the continuance and progress of a peaceful political movement like the Congress as it was easy. This was the first argument that impelled Syed Ahmad Khan to keep his community under restraint in politics. The second argument was no less potent. Mussalmans must educate themselves if they desired the uplift of their community, and yet it was no easy task to reconcile Mussalmans to Western education even in an institution of their own, which unlike Government colleges and schools, would not divorce religious from secular learning. The easy pursuit of a policy in which the Muslims could act as destructive critics of the hated infidel Government was sure to offer superior attractions to the dull and drab constructive programme of the educationalist, and he therefore set himself to oppose all diversion of Muslim activities into the more attractive, but for the time being less useful, political channel. Reviewing the actions of a bygone generation to-day when it is easier to be wise after the event, I must confess I still think the attitude of Syed Ahmad Khan was eminently wise, and much as I wish that some things which he had said should have been

left unsaid, I am constrained to admit that no well-wisher of Mussalmans, nor of India as a whole, could have followed a very different course in leading the Mussalmans.

Be it remembered that the man who enunciated this policy was not at the time a *persona grata* to the major portion of the community which he sought to lead. He was hated as a heretic because of the heterodoxy of his aggressive rationalism in interpreting the Holy Quran, and his militant opposition to popular superstitions believed in by the bulk of the orthodox and to shackling customs consecrated by time, though wholly unauthorised by Islam. He was abused and vilified by hundreds of thousands of his co-religionists, and for long the college that he had founded at Aligarh was the *bete noire* of the pious Muslim. And yet the entire community followed his political lead without a murmur. Neither fallacious arguments nor even political clap-trap could have possessed such potency, and it is my firm belief that his advocacy succeeded mainly because of the soundness of the policy advocated.

For two decades thereafter the Mussalmans had hardly any politics or any political institution worth the name. On important occasions when Syed Ahmed Khan, and, of course, his British supporters, thought that any demand of the Congress if satisfied would not be productive of good for the Mussalmans, he would call together a few of his friends, mostly Trustees of the Aligarh College, who used to form a society bearing some such name as the "Muslim Defence Association," and a resolution of this body would be published in the *Pioneer* and in Syed Ahmad Khan's own local weekly newspaper in due course. That was all that the Mussalmans would do in those days in the field of politics.

I am far from denying that Syed Ahmad Khan knew perfectly well that his policy was more than acceptable to his official supporters, who would have in all likelihood put every possible obstruction in the way of his college and his Educational Conference if he had followed another less

acceptable to them. But a very close study of his character leads me to declare that he was far from possessing the sycophancy with which some of his political critics have credited him. Indeed, even the opportunism of which his policy savoured could not have been entirely palatable to a nature so independent as his. In the year 1907, soon after the commmencement of a new era in Muslim politics inaugurated by the foundation of the Muslim League, to which I shall presently refer, there occurred a strike of the students of Syed Ahmad Khan's College at Aligarh, owing to the support given against them by their own English Principal and Professors to the Police that had picked up a quarrel with one of them. Just about that time fell the anniversary of Syed Ahmad Khan's death celebrated annually in the College as the "Founder's Day." For that occasion I had written in Urdu an Ode addressed to the late Founder of my College, and referring to this unmistakable indication of the students' self-respect and of their willingness to make the necessary self-sacrifice demanded by the haughty disdain of the foreigner, I had said :

It is you that had taught the community all this " mischief " if we are its culmination, you are its commencement.

" THE ARCH-REBEL "

That I am not alone in this estimate of Syed Ahmad Khan's character and policy will be proved by an interesting conversation that I shall relate. Once when my brother was still in the Public Service, an old English official asked him who, he thought, was the greatest rebel in India against British rule. And, correcting my brother's answer that experienced official had declared that it was no other than Syed Ahmad Khan, Loyalist of loyalists! when my brother protested against this astonishing judgment, he said : " Do you think young Mussalmans who are being taught at Aligarh almost as well as our own boys at Harrow and Winchester, who live their lives and can beat them at their own games, would obsequiously serve

them when they come out as Indian Civilians or members of such other superior services. No, Mr. Shaukat Ali, the days of British rule in India are numbered, and it is your loyal Syed Ahmad Khan that is the arch-rebel to-day!"

Like only too many of us, this British official too had failed to realise the paralysing effect of the education given in the colleges and schools established or favoured by this foreign Government, and had only foreseen the dissatisfacton and discontent that it must inevitably produce. With a Muslim University, chartered, aided and controlled by Government still flourishing at Aligarh, so far as the numbers of the teachers and the taught and a University Chest filled with the contributions of the rich are concerned, though robbed of all generous ideals and national and communal ambitions, and existing side by side with another, poor in everything save its ideals and its dreams, into which my old college had seemed to have transformed itself three years ago, I cannot boast that the "arch-rebel" of Aligarh has altogether succeeded in his "rebellious" endeavour. But it is my firm conviction that he had always aimed and intended to produce staunch Muslim and patriotic Indians even if he could not perhaps contemplate a near enough future for India in which his "young barbarians all at play," could be other than "loyal British subjects."

ALIGARH AND THE MUSLIM LEAGUE

To my mind, the most important problem to-day is the problem of Indian unity and India's nationhood, which, in other words, means the old, old Hindu Muslim problem. We are living to-day which for India is just as distinct as any year in the history of the world. This is the pre-Gandhian era, and what has gone before was practically the days of ignorance or as we in Islam call the days before our Prophet. The problem to-day, the problem of Hindu-Muslim Unity, is not precisely the same as it was in the pre-Gandhian days and yet it is a distressing and distracting problem. As one who is very late in coming to the Congress, not on any personal grounds but the whole community was very late in coming to the Congress,

the Mussalmans expect from me a reply to the question asked by many and although unasked by many more, still felt by all, what would be the policy of the Mussalmans to-day in reference to Hindu-Mussalman tensions. I could not avoid that subject, but what would be my answer ? I have read Logic, though I do not believe in it any more than my friend, Deshabandhu Das ! (*Laughter*). " Life is greater than Logic," he said, which means that history which was my subject for my Degree at Oxford is greater than Logic or Philosophy. (*Hear, hear.*) My only argument which has been developed at great length in this address is on this one single topic of Hindu-Moslem Unity, a unity which is nothing else but a repetition of the whole history of the Muslim development and I have sought to prove and I think I have conclusively proved that the Mussalmans did not rush into politics, that the Mussalmans did not rush into the Congress, that the Mussalmans did not rush into non-co-operation with the English and even to co-operation with their Hindu fellow-countrymen. But every step that they took, they took deliberately, slowly, almost painfully and reluctantly. But the force of circumstances and the reality of the situation drove them to take that step and it is that reality which is to keep them where they are and not let them go out of the Congress into those alluring backwaters of old politics (*hear, hear*) in which the Government kept us so long and wants us to keep us to-day. After this by way of preface, I need not, I think, apologise to any of you even though you may not be Mussalmans at all for my lengthy address because I wanted to exhaust the subject so that, if after that, I was pestered, as I am daily pestered, by my own co-religionists to give them an answer as to what is to be done in future, I could only refer them to the paragraphs specially devoted for such questions. I did not want to leave out a single loop-hole and if I speak to my co-religionists frankly to-day, it is from my bitter experience, as I have said somewhere in this address of mine, a trophy which is something that people who had been fighting a battle, value most. A trophy is greatly cherished by warriors and experience is the most cherished trophy and

it is a trophy made up of weapons that have hurt us. I have gone into the whole history of the Muhammadan community, how it was almost as bitter in 1857 against the British in India as it is to-day and how some of its best leaders kept that community out of the Indian National Congress when it came to be formed. The Mussalmans had lost their rule of India. It had slipped out of their hands gradually and imperceptibly in the long course of a hundred years between the battle of Plassey and the Indian Mutiny of 1857, as it is generally styled. When they woke up at last to discover the true situation—they did not awake fully they were still half asleep. They had lost their rule, but its traditions still remain with them and instead of working for victory after defeat, they began to skulk in their tents. They were justified to possess that temper, a temper in which they would have ruined any peaceful movement as the Indian National Congress has always been. They would have been a most dangerous thorn in the body-politic of the nation, because they were in that temper and were not sufficiently educated in Western lore. At least in the pre-Gandhian days, I believe the Indian National Congress was a movement only of the educated classes, of those who had been educated along Western ways. Syed Ahmed Khan, the founder of the Aligarh College, where I myself and my brother and a large number of Mussalmans including extremists like Mr. Sherwani, Mr. Kwaja, Dr. Mahomed, have been educated there, foresaw in the then tenor of the Mussalmans that to let them go into a body of critics of the Government would be to let them go into a place where they would revel in criticism and do nothing else; they would have even wrecked the Congress. I have also said here, you will notice, I have traced the close connection between the foundation of the Indian National Congress and the foundation of the first important national or rather communal Muslim political institution known as the Muslim League. It practically took 30 years, which corresponds to the growth of a new generation, it took 30 years for the foundation of the Universities of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay to come into being. The

first political educational centre was started at Aligarh. I leave here the Muslim history. I now jump over to the Muslim period.

Nearly thirty years after the foundation of the Universities in the three Presidency towns of India—a period which corresponds with the growth of a new generation—the Congress had inevitably come into existence. It was no easy task that Syed Ahmed Khan had accomplished in founding an Anglo-Oriental College of his own community within two decades of the Indian Mutiny in the very regions which had formed the storm centre in 1857. In obedience, as it were, to a law of nature, once more nearly thirty years after the foundation of this College, there came into being a political institution of the Mussalmans who had not availed themselves of the educational facilities provided by the State Universities, and could not consequently share in the political awakening which those Universities had indirectly brought about. And it is not without significance that fairly prominent among the founders of the Muslim League at Dacca at the end of 1906 were some alumni of Syed Ahmad Khan's own College.

This inaugrated a new era in the political life of the Indian Mussalmans. Some months previously a Muslim Deputation had waited at Simla on the Viceroy, Lord Minto, to place before him and his Government a statement of the Muslim demands in connection with the Minto-Morely Reforms then foreshadowed. To follow the fashion of British journalists during the War, "there is no harm *now* in saying" that the Deputation's was a "command" performance! It was clear that Government could no longer resist the demands of educated Indians, and, as usual, it was about to dole out to them a morsel that would keep them gagged for some years. Hitherto the Mussalmans had acted very much like the Irish prisoner in the dock who, in reply to the judge's inquiry whether he had any counsel to represent him in the trial, had frankly replied that he had certainly not engaged counsel, but that he had "friends in the

jury"! But now the Muslims' "friends in the jury" had themselves privately urged that the accused should engage duly qualified counsel like all others. From whatever source the inspiration may have come, there is no doubt that the Muslim cause was this time properly advocated. In the common territorial electorates the Mussalmans had certainly not succeeded in securing anything like adequate or real representation, and those who denounced and deplored the creation of separate electorates for which the Mussalmans had pleaded should have remembered that separate electorates were the consequence, and *not* the cause, of the separation between Mussalmans and their more numerous Hindu brethren.

I like to mention in this connection that not long ago, I was present at Belgaum and the Municipal Board presented an address to my brother and myself. It was particularly asked by that large-hearted Brahman Mr. Deshpande (Mr. Deshmukh?) to speak something with reference to Brahman and non-Brahman quarrels. I said I have every sympathy with both the Brahman and the non-Brahman sections. I said that I greatly sympathise with the non-Brahmans and that this was the *Karma* of the majority, because I felt certain that Brahmans have learnt the lesson and in order that it is fully crystallised in India, they could never give too much to the non-Brahmans if they could thereby make the whole of India a perfectly united nation. I felt certain that in future this were the spirit prevailing in the various communities, more particularly in the strongest communities, the minorities would readily join the nationalist movement and would be only too glad to work shoulder to shoulder with the majorities, without any diffidence, without any hesitation, without any mistrust or reluctance on their part.

SEPARATE ELECTORATES HASTEN INDIAN UNITY

But little could the official supporters of the Muslim community have suspected at the time that, paradoxical as it may seem, the creation of separate electorates was hastening the advent of Hindu-Muslim unity. For the first

time a real franchise, however restricted, was being offered to Indians, and if Hindus and Mussalmans remained just as divided as they had hitherto been since the commencement of British rule, and often hostile to one another, mixed electorates would have provided the best battle-ground for inter-communal strifes, and would have still further widened the gulf separating the two communities. Each candidate for election would have appealed to his own community for votes, and would have based his claims for preference on the intensity of his ill-will towards the rival community, however disguised this may have been under some such formula as "the defence of his community's interests." Bad as this would have been, the results of an election in which the two communities were not equally matched would have been even worse, for the community that failed to get its representative elected would have inevitably borne a yet deeper grudge against its successful rival. Divided as the two communities were, there was no chance for any political principles coming into prominence during the elections. The creation of separate electorates did a great deal to put a stop to this inter-communal warfare, though I am far from oblivious of the fact that when inter-communal jealousies are acute, the men that are more likely to be returned even from communal electorates are just those who are noted for their ill-will towards the rival community.

"UNITED FAITHS OF INDIA"

In the controversy that raged round the representation of Mussalmans *as a community* I had taken my full share; but no sooner the Muslim claim had been recognised in practice in the elections to the enlarged councils in 1910, I decided to launch a weekly journal of my own from the seat of the Government of India in order to assist my community in taking its proper share in the political life of the country. I was particularly anxious to help it to understand that, while endeavouring to satisfy the pressing needs of the present, which would inevitably bring it now and then into conflict with other elements in the body-politic, it should never lose sight of the prospects of the

future when ultimately all communal interests had to be adjusted so as to harmonise with the paramount interests of India.

I had long been convinced that here in this country of hundreds of millions of human beings, intensely attached to religion, and yet infinitely split up into communities, sects and denominations, Providence had created for us the mission of solving a unique problem and working out a new synthesis, which was nothing less than a Federation of Faiths! As early as in 1904, when I had been only two years in India after my return from Oxford, I had given to this idea a clear, if still somewhat hesitating expression, in an address delivered at Ahmedabad on the "Proposed Mahomedan University." "Unless some new force"—this is what I had said on that occasion—"unless some new force, *other than the misleading unity of opposition*, unites this vast continent of India, it will either remain a geographical misnomer, or what I think it will ultimately do, become a Federation of Religions." I had noted the strength of the centrifugal force of Indian communities; I have got huge bunches of telegrams that came from Bengal, still more from Mr. Das, and still more from the Punjab. I still feel that there are strong centrifugal forces in India. And yet hope and faith and the deep yearning for freedom had even then made me realise the latent centripetal force of Indian unity. The lines of cleavage were too deeply marked to permit a unity other than federal; and yet, as I had observed in the address from which I have already quoted, the cleavage was not territorial or racial in character, but religious. For more than twenty years I have dreamed the dream of a federation, grander, nobler and infinitely more spiritual than the United States of America, and to-day when many a political Cassandra prophesies a return to the bad old days of Hindu-Muslim dissensions, I still dream that old dream of "United *Faiths* of India." It was in order to translate this dream into reality that I had launched my weekly newspaper, and had significantly called it *The Comrade*—"comrade of all and partisan of none!" (*Laughter.*)

I hope my Swarajist friends and No-Change friends will see that I deserve the title of Comrade being a comrade to all; that I made the "Comrade" a friend and comrade of all and a partisan of none.

Friends, is it so entirely out of place if I quote a little from the first words that I had contributed to the first issue of the *Comrade*? In view of the political controversy that had been raging in India, I naturally shrank from relating my dream when making my *debut* before a sceptical, matter-of-fact world. And yet the dream was all the time there for those who did not despise dreams.

We have no faith (I wrote on the 14th January, 1911) in the cry that India is united. If India was united where was the need of dragging the venerable President of this year's Congress (Sir William Wedderburn) from a distant home? The bare imagination of a feast will not dull the edge of hunger. We have less faith still in the sanctimoniousness that transmutes in its subtle alchemy a rapacious monopoly into fervent patriotism.

> "Even as poor birds deceiv'd with painted grapes
> Do surfeit by the eye, and pine the maw."

Those of us who cannot distinguish true gold from the glitter of spurious coins, will one day surfeit by the ear and pine the heart. But the person we love best, fear the most, and trust the least is the impatient idealist. Goethe said of Byron that he was a prodigious poet, but that when he reflected, he was a child. Well, we think no better and no worse of the man who combines great ideals and a greater impatience. So many efforts, well-meaning as well as ill-begotten, have failed in bringing unity to this distracted land, that we cannot spare even cheap and scentless flowers of sentiment for the grave of another ill-judged endeavour. We shall not make the mistake of gumming together pieces of broken glass, and then cry over the unsuccessful result, or blame the refractory material. In other words, we shall endeavour to face the situation boldly, and respect facts, howsoever ugly and ill-favoured. It is poor statesmanship to slur over inconvenient realities, and not the least important success in achieving unity is the honest and frank recognition of deep-seated prejudices that hinder it and the yawning differences that divide.

But while providing for to-day, we must not forget the morrow. It is our firm belief that if the Mussalmans or the Hindus attempt to achieve success in opposition to, or even without the co-operation of one another they will not only fail, but fail ignominiously. (*Hear, hear.*) But every step has to be taken with caution. Nothing in

history, ancient or modern, provides a useful analogy to the condition of modern India. History never repeats itself. But it is still the best educative force for mankind, and it has its lessons for us also. The problems of India are almost international. But when the statesmen and philanthropists of Europe, with all its wars of interests and national jealousies, do not despair of abolishing war and placing Pax on the throne of Bellona, shall we despair of Indian nationality? (President's comment:—Europe has made a mess of its arbitration courts and its international efforts at securing peace. But I hope we who are a more spiritual people will achieve unity even before Europe can do.) (*Hear, hear.*) We may not create to-day the patriotic fervour and the fine national frenzy of Japan with its forty millions of homogeneous people. But a concordat like that of Canada is not beyond the bounds of practicability. It may not be a love-marriage, born of romance and poetry. But a *marriage de convenance*, honourably contracted and honourably maintained, is not to be despised. Let us begin with honest prose, and the Muses will not forbid the bans. Even this is no easy task. But it is one worthy of the sons and daughters of India, and deserves their toil and self-sacrifice. O! Unity,

> "Thou wilt come, join men, knit nation unto nation;
> But not for us who watch to-day and burn,
> Thou wilt come; but after what long years of trial,
> Weary watching, Patient longing, dull denial!"

Friends, three years ago we were privileged to catch more than a fleeting glimpse of the unity of which I had dreamed, and if to-day we have to admit, as we must, that the dream has not been realised as fully as we wish, we shall have once more to examine the situation carefully and to face inconvenient facts with candour and with courage. I propose to do that presently, but not to break the thread of my narrative I revert to the situation as it existed at the time when I made my journalistic *debut*.

MUSLIMS AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

As I had foreseen, the separate electorates returned both Hindus and Mussalmans who were not averse to combine in the various legislatures to support the popular cause. Nevertheless, inter-communal hostility did not altogether cease in the country. A new element was, however, unexpectedly added to the situation by the aggression of Western nations against Muslim States and its effect on Muslim sentiment in India, and although

there are not wanting even to-day staunch non-Muslim nationalists who look askance at Indian Muslim feeling with regard to Muslim affairs abroad, a little reflection would show that the new element to which I have referred, even while undoubtedly diverting the attention of Indian Mussalmans to some extent from affairs at home, hastened Muslim disillusionment with regard to their traditional reliance on their foreign Government and thereby contributed greatly to Indian unity.

Here I must say that at that time, I did not expect that foreign affairs of the Muslims would to any great extent occupy my time or energy. I still thought that the greatest problem of all before us was the Hindu-Moslem question in India. But what happened since 1911? Blow after blow was struck at the Temporal power of Islam and never in the whole of 1300 and odd years of Islamic history had there ever been a period so gloomy and disastrous for us, until very recently of course. With regard to the foreign affairs, as I shall presently show, some people still say—why should the Mussalmans of India be so busy with the Khilafat and why not they concentrate their attention entirely upon India and its problems. Well, if you carefully examine the history of the last dozen years you will come to know how our disasters in foreign affairs have thrown us back on you. We feel grateful for the concentration of the Mussalmans on foreign affairs outside the confines of India, because it has made us realise that we must after all come to Indians for the proper solution of our difficulties in the foreign countries abroad. (*Hear, hear.*)

In India too, an important thing happened. In foreign affairs we realised from the way in which Great Britain behaved towards Morocco, the Arabs in Tripoli, the Turks in the Balkans, even in 1912 that these "Friends in the Jury," as they call themselves, were not friendly at all. (*Laughter.*) I had perpetrated an epigram. Many a man told me that such and such a man had great influence with the Government. We now know what this 'influence' means. It means really that the

Government has great influence with them and over them. (*Laughter.*) We realised that when we were used as cats'-paws to fight our Hindu brethren, and when afterwards we were betrayed even in the most wonted traditions of our religion abroad as well as in India.

But I refer to the Partition of Bengal and the troubles between the Hindus and the Mussalmans which followed. The two great protagonists, my friend the Editor of the *Servant* and my friend, Desabandhu Das, who are now ranged on opposite sides, were then combined and united in their condemnation of the Partition of Bengal. The benighted and the uneducated Mussalman wanted the Bengal Partition to remain unaltered. But really I never believed in that Partition. Only I ask you to realise the fact that this Government had to call upon the Mussalmans to fight as its auxiliaries against the Hindus in Bengal. Undoubtedly, I say, the Partition of Bengal, although it was most unjust and carried out in most vindictive spirit by Lord Curzon, did benefit the Mussalmans to a certain extent. Yet, when the Government found that things were getting too hot for it, it dropped the Mussalmans like a hot potato. (*Laughter.*) Never was a more ignoble betrayal perpetrated in the whole history of Indian politics.

THE OUTLOOK IN 1911

I had intended the *Comrade* to be the organ that was to voice the sentiments I entertained regarding the need of an inter-communal federation for India. It was to prepare the Mussalmans to make their proper contribution to territorial patriotism without abating one jot of the fervour of their extra-territorial sympathies, which are, as you must know, part of the quintessence of Islam. When I first thought of launching on a career of journalism, I did not expect that any but a small fraction of my attention and energies would be attracted by Muslim politics outside the confines of my own country. It is true that affairs in Egypt did not present a very reassuring appearance; nor did the new Constitutions in Turkey and Persia receive, after an initial outburst

of welcome, their full measure of sympathy which we in India felt to be due to such heroic and hazardous enterprises from England, the one European power with which we had all along been exclusively concerned. The only other European Power on our political horizon had been Russia. So long as after the overthrow of France a hundred years previously she was the most considerable of the Powers on the continent of Europe, and had further aggravated that situation by aiming at being a yet greater power on the continent of Asia, everyone in India had been sedulously taught by the masters of India's destinies to regard her as the enemy of mankind, and to believe that it was the sacred mission of England to thwart and defeat her. But the rapid rise of Japan and its signal success in defeating Russia in the Far East, while it encouraged other Oriental nations to hold up their heads and to hope, so radically altered the position of Russia that, from being an inveterate enemy, she became a friend and in all but name an ally of England, even though it was her victorious adversary that had been, and still remained, the acknowledged and official ally of that nation. This speedily reacted on Eastern politics, not only in Persia, where Russia openly stood up as a high-handed dictator, and where it was soon to cause a hail-storm of ultimatums, but also in Turkey, where the rivalries of the Slav and the Teuton now reappeared with added vehemence in the form of a struggle between *Entente* and Alliance. Once more had the Near East become the storm-centre of European politics.

All this was no doubt disquieting enough to Indian Mussalmans who had been brought up from their childhood to regard England as the friend and Russia as the enemy of Muslim States. But the political controversies of Hindus and Mussalmans appeared none the less to be their immediate concern in India. The passions that these inter-communal differences had unfortunately aroused just a little previously had lent to them the semblance of acute international conflict, while Turkey and Persia still seemed comparatively remote.

But things did not proceed precisely in the way in which I had so optimistically forecasted. The year 1911 proved a fateful year for Muslim States. The new Governments of Turkey, Persia and Morocco all began to meet with squalls in their initial voyage of reform and progress, which soon developed into regular storms.

THE DURBAR ANNOUNCEMENT

In India, too, the year proved more fateful for Mussalmans than any one could have predicted. Just before the close of the year the King-Emperor made a portentous Announcement at Delhi where he had come ostensibly to announce in person in an Imperial Durbar only the event of his Coronation that year. It was admittedly an "abrupt departure from the tradition of British Government and a complete dislocation of official habits." But this unusual procedure, and the secrecy which had been maintained, not only at the expense of India but also at that of the Local Governments, were justified on the ground that the Imperial Announcement was "one of the most weighty decisions ever taken since the establishment of the British rule in India," and that the discussion of measures which were being taken in consequence of an agitation that indicated "bitterness of feeling," and was at the same time "very widespread and unyielding," would have in its turn caused endless agitation. As we all know, the Announcement comprised a re-adjustment of territories upsetting Lord Curzon's vindictive Partition of Bengal and the creation of the new Province of Behar and Orissa after the re-union of Bengal, East and West. It also indirectly penalised Bengal by shifting the capital to Delhi. As I wrote in the *Comrade* at the time, I was in favour of both these schemes, "taking each by itself as wholly unconnected schemes," and "irrespective of the time, place and procedure preferred by the Government of India for the Announcement." The partition in the form then approved was due in 1905, and the transfer of the capital was needed in 1858. Lords Curzon and Middleton had sinned in a hurry, and it would have seemed that Lords Hardinge and Crewe were repenting at leisure. But it was

clear from the King-Emperor's Announcement as well as from the despatches of the Government of India and the Secretary of State, that "the key-stone of the whole project" was the "proposal to make Delhi the future capital of India"; that it was only "as a consequence of the transfer" that the Partition was modified; that the Bengalis were expected to be "reconciled to the change" of capital by "*other features of the scheme which were specially designed to give satisfaction to Bengali sentiment*"; and that the re-union of the two Bengals was no more than "the compensation which will be offered to Bengali sentiment" for "the objections to the transfer which are likely to be entertained in some quarters." There was not a word in the Government of India's Despatch about such things as the financial embarrassment of the administration in Eastern Bengal, the unsatisfactory results of yoking Assam with a part of Bengal, or the difficulties of communication between the Rajshahi Division and Dacca, all of which could have been utilized to justify the unsettlement of a "settled fact." The Partition of 1905 was indeed acknowledged in that Despatch to have fulfilled "two of the chief purposes which its authors had in view." "It relieved," so ran the Despatch, "the over-burdened administration of Bengal, and it gave the Mahomedan population of Eastern Bengal advantages and opportunities of which they had, perhaps, hitherto not had their fair share." But Bengal had to be deprived of the distinction of claiming the capital of India as its own capital as well, and of the opportunities it had thus enjoyed of criticising the Government of India and subjecting it to constant pressure from such close quarters. We had already been familiarised, to the extent of feeling downright moral contempt for it, with the doctrine of compensation in the foreign politics of Europe, according to which Morocco had been given to France for the sake of a free hand for the English in Egypt, and Tripoli had been all but given to Italy, while Germany had made her famous *Panther* leap at Agadir. This fatal doctrine had now peacefully penetrated into the internal administration of India. "Eastern Bengal and Assam," wrote the Government of

India, "have no doubt benefitted greatly by the Partition, and the Mahomedans of the province, who form a large majority of the population, are loyal and contented; but the resentment among the Bengalis in both the provinces of Bengal, who hold most of the land, fill the professions and exercise a preponderating influence in public affairs, is as strong as ever." As I wrote on that occasion, "what could be easier than to politely disburden the loyal and contented Peter of his few worldly belongings in order to load the discontented, if not disloyal, Paul with rewards and compensation? The Mussalmans have no *Panther* to send to Agadir, and it is too well-established a rule of diplomacy that: no *Panther*, no compensation!"

INCIDENTS

Now I will relate to you an incident which will take away something of the exhaustive nature of my address. I will relate to you an incident which happened when the Delhi announcement was made by His Majesty the King-Emperor. My dear old friend, Sir Charles Cleveland, the Head of the C. I. D. (take note of it, said the President turning towards the Government Reporters in the Press Block—(*laughter*) who was standing very close to me saw me getting the first copy of the announcement that was being handed to the men in the Press gallery where I was seated as the Editor of the *Comrade*. This official, as I was reading it to myself, asked me: "Well, Mohamed Ali, is it anything for you or for me?" because, he knew nothing of it. It was in fact kept secret from high officials, even from the Lieutenant-Governor of East Bengal. What was my answer to this question? I said: "There is nothing for me; but, Sir Charles, there is plenty of work for you." (*Laughter.*) I think we have given them some work to do.

You know the Mahomedan era begins from the flight of the Prophet, which is known as the Hijra. I call 1912 as Lord Hardinge's Hijra, the flight of Lord Hardinge (*laughter*) who went back from the "Partition of Bengal" said to be a "settle fact". There is the policy of 'give-

and-take ' to which I have to refer tn this connection. In the case of the loyal and steady Behar, it was nothing but a case of ' take ' in regard to the Partition and re-partition. (*Laughter.*) They got a new province and they swallowed a small provincc called Orissa and another called Chota-Nagpur. But in the case of the Muslims of East Bengal, it was nothing but a policy of "give, give, give." (*Laughter.*) They got nothing out of the Partition. Why, because it was counted that they were loyal and contented. I say loyal we shall always be, but contented we shall not remain. (*Laughter.*) And I am not quite sure whether we have remained very loyal either. (*Renewed laughter.*) I was entirely for the re-partition and also entirely for the change of Capital as well. But the way in which it was done, was an absolute betrayal of the Mussalman cause. Thank God, we were betrayed and it opened our eyes and we found precisely what I once told the French people in Paris some time ago. I said to them : " Friends, you are an ally of England. If you could learn something from the experiences of Asiatics living very far from you, but who have had the experience of the underdog which you have not yet, you should make your peace with the Germans directly. You will do it at much lesser cost than you can through the alliance of France with England. " We realise in India that we could make our peace with you (*i.e.*, the Hindus) on much better terms and much less sacrifice than we could have done with the help of the English. I pass over all this and the entire history of the Muslim League, and how it came to have for its ideal a self-government suited to India.

ITS REACTION ON MUSLIM POLITICS

While I declared in the *Comrade* that " in our judgment the Mussalmans should accept the decision of the Government, " I could not but say that they had deserved a better fate. Before the Partition they had laboured under many difficulties and had endured everything quietly as only the weak can endure. It was not they that had clamoured and agitated for the Partition. Nevertheless, the Partition came to them as a well-deserved

though wholly unexpected blessing. Their condition had begun to improve, and with that their ambitions and hopes. It may even be confessed that, like all *noveaux riches*, these political *parvenus* sometimes held their heads too high and strutted about in the peacock manner. But, like the exaltation born of a draught of haschish, it did not last long, and the reaction came with a suddenness and a force that were terrible. The emancipated slaves were, so to speak, once more sold into bondage, and who does not know that revenge is sweet? Their old masters could have been excused if on being placed once more in the position of the slave-driver they had used the lash and the bastinado a little too lavishly. The Mussalmans of Eastern Bengal had been made to fight the battle of their rulers, against their neighbours, and now that it was no longer convenient for the rulers to continue the fight, they had made their own peace with all convenient speed, and had left the Mussalmans to the mercy of those against whom they had been used as auxiliaries. It would be hard to discover in history a more ignoble instance of betrayal in which "loyalty" has been rewarded with deprivation of recently recovered rights, and "contentment" has been punished as the worst of crimes. Perhaps I may mention without any indiscretion that when immediately after the Announcement I drove over in haste to interview Sir Charles Bayley, the head of the Local Government now thrown on the scrap-heap, I met Lord Sinha and Sir Benode Mitter, who asked me what I thought of the Announcement. I told them that in the case of the Hindus of Bengal the Announcement had been a matter of "give-and-take," that for "sturdy, loyal" Beharis it had been one of "take" only, but that for the Mussalmans of Eastern Bengal it had been one of nothing but "give," and as a reward for their loyalty and contentment they had been given a generous helping of humble pie. And then I walked off with the mumbled prayer that they might be spared too acute an attack of indigestion! In the Durbar itself a little earlier I remember that I had been accosted by my old friend Sir Charles Cleveland, Director of the Criminal Intelligence Department, as I was hastily perusing the Announcement.

As it happened, I was among the very first in the Press Camp to receive a copy of it from the hands of the official who was distributing them. Sir Charles had humorously asked me if there was anything in the Announcement for me or for him, and I had replied with ill-suppressed bitterness that there was nothing for me, but that there was a plenty of work for him. And who can say that my prophecy has not proved true?

Friends, I have gone into this matter at considerable length only because the Announcement has always appeared to me to be a very distinct landmark in the political progress of the Mussalmans. Nothing could have more clearly convinced them that their dependence upon a foreign Government for support against sister communities laid them perpetually open to such betrayals. They now realised that they could place no reliance on such support, whether at home or abroad, and it set them thinking that perhaps at a much smaller sacrifice of their interests they could purchase lasting peace and even secure the friendship of their neighbours and fellow-countrymen.

SELF-GOVERNMENT AS THE MUSLIM LEAGUE'S CREED

The Muslim League, although never an anti-Hindu or anti-Congress organisation, had at its birth in the very midst of the Partition agitation, naturally emphasised in its creed the protection of communal interests and loyalty to Government, even though it had also included therein the promotion of harmony and concord with sister-communities. A year after the Durbar Announcement, the Council of the League recommended a change in the creed, and it emphasised in the new creed that it recommended "Self-government suitable for India" as its ideal. (This is about the change of Muslim creed.) In commenting upon this change, which was eventually accepted by the League in its annual session in the following March, I had stated that for the Mussalmans their new political creed was but "the half-way house from which their ultimate destination was clearly visible," and I do not think I can do better in helping you

to form a just estimate of our position to-day than quote from the *Comrade* of that date the following passage which I would ask all Nationalists, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, to consider carefully:

But it is not so much on the reform of the administration by the administrators and those to whom they are responsible, nor even on the relationship that comes to exist between the ruler and the ruled that the attainment of self-government depends. Self-government is the necessary corollary of self-realisation, and India as a whole has not yet realised herself. Once her conflicting interests, warring creeds and rival communities not only conceive that India can be one in her soul as she is in her body, but feel her unity as an individual feels the unity of his individual self inspite of the diversity of the various members and organs of his body, and the varying moods of his intellect and soul, there is no power in the world that can deny her self-government But we would warn our countrymen against playing the sedulous ape in their methods of nation-making as we have warned them in the matter of their choosing their political goal. . . . In India, political unity can be achieved not so much by annihilating smaller units that may appear to conflict with the ultimate scheme of unity, but by recognising their force and inevitableness. If we could choose a motto for a society of nation-makers in India, we could suggest nothing better than what the United States of America have adopted on their coins. India is to be a *pluribus unum*.

MUSSALMANS AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

In foreign affairs the year 1912 had opened with far different prospects from those of 1911. Up to the last, Indian Mussalmans had entertained the hope that things would right themselves. But this did not happen, and the year ended even worse than it had begun. The sad disillusionment with regard to international morality for which the shameless brigandage of Italy in Tripoli was responsible had greatly affected the Mussalmans in the autumn of 1911. If any further disillusionment was needed it was supplied by the action of Russia in Persia and Britain's "sanctimonious acquiescence." In both cases the utmost brutality characterised European aggression. Who can forget the massacres in the Tripoli Oasis or the celebration in Persia of the New Year, which coincided with the anniversary of the Tragedy of Kerbala, when, among others, the Siqat-ul-Islam, the highest ecclesiastic of Northern Persia—"a man universally respected alike for his learning, his piety

and his tolerance"—was hanged by the Russians. If anything could surpass these things in the anguish they caused to Muslim minds, it was the threatened aeroplane attack on the Holy Ka'ba by Italy and the actual bombardment of Holy Meshad by Russia which followod them. Truly did Mr. Shuster declare at a banquet given in his honour by the Persia Committee in London on his visit there after his expulsion from Persia: "I am not bitter about my own experience, but I should be a hypocrite if I pretended not to sympathise with the bitterness of the Mahomedan people who have so forcibly learned the lesson that the Ten Commandments do not apply to international politics. Let anyone who doubts this review the events of the past year." These bitter experiences were destined to be followed by those still more bitter in 1912 in the autumn of which broke out the Balkan War, which at one time threatened to expel the Turks from Europe after nearly five hundred years.

REACTION ON MUSLIM FEELING IN INDIA

The attitude of England towards the enemies of Turkey, Persia and Morocco had begun to alienate the sympathies of Indian Mussalmans from England ever since 1911; and this estrangement could not but react on their relations with the British officials here, who, in spite of their detestation of the Radical politicians in power in England, could not help looking askance at Indians daring to criticise an English Government with a candour and a courage unusual in a subject race. The *Comrade* case, which for the first time brought home to Indians the power of the now defunct Press Act for evil, was concerned, as many of you may still remember, with the forfeiture of a pamphlet received from the Turks. In this they had only appealed to England for Christian succour against the Balkan Allies whose Macedonion atrocities were therein depicted. While this litigation was going on, the fatal developments following on the demolition of part of a small mosque at Cawnpore embittered Muslim feeling still further. In consequence of all this I had proceeded to England,

in company with the then Secretary of the Muslim League, to appeal to the British Government and persuade it to alter a policy, Indian as well as foreign, that seemed to bode no good to anybody, and which was sure to drive the Muslims to despair. In this we partly succeeded; but within a year events of far greater magnitude occurred in which the entire world was involved. The War and the events leading to the participation of Turkey not on the same side as England undid all the good that we had expected to follow the friendly Deputation of Indian Mussalmans which we had taken to wait on Lord Hardinge earlier in the year, and which had been received by the Viceroy with every show of good will.

OUTBREAK OF WAR AND MUSLIM FEELING IN INDIA

When the war with Germany broke out, I think I fairly represented the feeling of educated and responsible Indian Mussalmans who were too self-respecting to play the sycophant when I wrote in the *Comrade* of the 12th August 1914, as follows:—

> There are still some sane people among Indians themselves, and though they do not advertise the offer of their personal services to the Government, whatever influence they possess with the people would be used to decrease rather than increase the Government's embarrassment. They could offer no better guarantee than this that they regard India's connection with Great Britain as, at the present stage of India's growth, indispensable; and we are sure that the less lofty motive of self-interest would wear better and stand the strain of circumstances longer than the lip-loyalty of Ji-Huzurs.
>
> Whether Great Britain has respected Muslim Indian feeling in her dealings with Turkey, Persia, Morocco, or not; whether the utterances of His Majesty's Ministers regarding the Turks in their life and death struggle during the last war have been just and consistent, or unjust and inconsistent; whether their action following two breaches of treaty obligations, by Austria in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and by Italy in the Tripolitaine, have tallied or not with the recent public proclamation of their sense of the sacredness of treaties; whether their conscience has revolted or not at the slaughter of babes and sucklings, unprotected womanhood and bed-ridden age in Tripoli and the Balkans; whether the white Colonials' treatment of their coloured fellow-citizens of the same Empire has been fair or otherwise; whether the Home Government has exerted its full pressure on the Colonials to right the

wrong, or has only assumed an incredible impotence; whether Indians' claims for an equitable adjustment of rights and duties and for a fair share in guiding the destinies of their own country have been met by the British Bureaucracy in the spirit of friendliness, or of jealousy and rancour; whether in the annulment of the Partition of Bengal, the Mussalmans were treated with due consideration for their loyalty, or it was under-rated and their contentment taken too much for granted; whether the sanctity of their places of worship and the integrity of their graveyards have been uniformly respected, or sometimes lightly sacrificed to the Moloch of Prestige—we say that, irrespective of any or all these considerations, or rather because we have carefully weighed them all against the one supreme consideration, our need of England and her tutelage at the present stage of our national and communal growth, and found her good exceeding by a great deal her evil, we shall remain loyal to her as only freemen can remain loyal, with a sincere devotion and an unbought submission, and this whether she crushes the naval power of Germany and becomes a dictator to Europe, or the last ship of her mighty Armada sinks in the North Sea and her last soldier falls down and dies round Liege or London . . . . . Even if England may not need us, we have need of her. Believing in political purity rather than in political prudery, we have entered the lists with her biggest bureaucrats in India in time of peace. But in time of war the clash of steel in civic battles must cease and the voice of controversy must be hushed, and if we cannot hastily command in others an enthusiasm for this war which we ourselves do not feel, let us once and for all assure the Government that, so far as we and those within the orbit of our influence are concerned, they can sleep in peace. Let alone Provincial satraps and the still greater despots of their districts, their meanest, if not their humblest, policeman will find us at his beck and call whenever civic excitement has to be allayed. More than this we cannot proclaim. Less than this we shall not confess. This is and has always been our creed and to that we shall adhere.

Friends, I fear, I must have exhausted your patience with these long quotations from the *Comrade*, but I feel certain of your indulgence if you would only consider the object I have in view. This long narration is intended to show to the world how different were the feelings of Indian Mussalmans towards this Government until quite recent times, and what patience we had shown in the face of injustice, indifference and continued callousness.

TURKEY AND INDIAN MUSLIM FEELING

. . . At the suggestion of Government, and through its own medium, I had even cabled, along with

my friend Dr. Ansari, to the late lamented Talaat Pasha urging the Turks to think a thousand times before they participated in the War. And even when war being forced on Turkey by ill-advised threats such as those of the London *Times*, my very long, well-known and in the English Press extensively quoted and highly approved article, in reply to that of the *Times* on the " Choice of the Turks," had shown to what lengths Indian Mussalmans were then prepared to go in assisting their foreign Government.

I shall only quote to you the final conclusion at which after very careful and detailed reasoning I had myself arrived in that article, and which I had recommended to the Mussalmans for adoption as the policy of the community :

> All truly loyal people (I wrote) have closed the chapter of civic controversy with the officials and into that book they are likely to look no more. Whatever our grievances, whatever reforms we desire, everything must wait for a more seasonable occasion. Even if the Government were to concede to us all that we ever desired or dream ; if, for instance, the Muslim University were offered to us on our own terms, or the Press Act repeal were to be announced ; or even if Self-Government were to be conceded to us, we would humbly tell Government this is no time for it, and we must for the present decline such concessions with thanks. Concessions are asked for and accepted in peace. We are not Russian Poles. We need no bribes !

A conclusion such as this had recommended itself even to the Calcutta correspondent of the *Morning Post*. And yet it was for publishing this very article that I forfeited the security of the *Comrade* Press and had in consequence to discontinue that paper. It was then that a distinguished weekly journal of England, *The New Statesman*, severely criticised the Government of India in a leading article sarcastically headed "Encouraging Loyalty in India"! And when the war with Turkey actually broke out, a representative of the *Associated Press* and *Reuter* interviewed me at Delhi and subsequently informed me that the interview was much appreciated by the Viceroy who had seen it before publication. I had predicted in the previous article that even if war broke out with the Turks, the anchor of the

Indian Mussalmans' loyalty would hold, and now that war had broken out I repeated that the anchor still held. I asked them to commend their souls to God and to place their services at the disposal of the Government for the preservation of peace and tranquillity in India. I compared their position to that of the children of parents who had quarrelled with one another. "Right may be on one side or the other, but the sorrow and suffering are in any case those of the children."

THE LIMITS OF MUSLIM "LOYALTY"

In this interview, as also in the last leading article the *Comrade* was permitted to publish before it closed its doors it was clearly indicated that Mussalmans were placing implicit reliance on the solemn pledges given by the British Government and Britain's Allies with regard to their faith and the Holy Places of Islam. I had distinctly pointed out that *Arabia must not be attacked nor must the protection of Islam's Holy Places by a really independent Muslim Power be endangered.* This was the least to which Indian Mussalmans were entitled unless their religion was required by their non-Muslim Government to be a matter of no consequence to them as compared with their "loyalty" to that Government. I may add that I had concluded my interview with the statement that the Muslims could be trusted to act on the precept of Jesus Christ to render unto Cæsar what is due to Cæsar. But I was informed by the distinguished journalist who had recorded the interview that the Censor of Press telegrams, who was no doubt a good Christian, while passing the rest of the message, had carefully scored out the exhortation of Jesus Christ. (*Laughter.*) No doubt that astute official, who believed in the supremacy of the State over the Church, thought that if the Muslims were reminded of their duty to render unto Cæsar what was due to Cæsar, they might perchance remember the accompanying exhortation also to render unto God what was due to God! (*Renewed laughter.*)

DEFIANCE OF MUSLIM RELIGION AND DISREGARD OF MUSLIM RIGHTS

This was precisely what happened before very long, and the history of our betrayal is too recent to be repeated in any detail. During the War, Mussalmans were required, in defence of their religious obligations, to assist Government in waging war against the Khalifa and those engaged in Jihad. The Jazirat-ul-Arab, which includes Syria, Palestine and Mesopotamia, and which Mussalmans were required by their faith at all times to keep free from non-Muslim occupation and control, was attacked and occupied by Great Britain and her Allies, and is still under their control in defiance of their Prophet's well-known testamentary injunction. The Holy Places of Islam, *which are not particular buildings merely, but territories*, including the three Sacred Harams of Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem, have been filched from the Successor of the Prophet and Commander of the Faithful, who is their only accredited Servant and Warden, and even to-day he is not permitted to occupy, defend and serve them. The dismemberment of the Empire of the Khalifa ; the appointment of non-Muslim Mandatories to control various portions of it ; and the consequent weakening of the temporal power of Islam to the point of danger to its spiritual influence, through the possible pressure of the temporal power of rival creeds, were openly advocated by the Allies, and none of them insisted upon this course so relentlessly up to the last as Great Britain herself. As we all know, Greece was her own brutal nominee and agent in the execution of this policy even after the armistice in defiance of all laws of peace or war, and howsoever much the other Allies also may have resisted Ismet Pasha at Lausanne, it was Great Britain herself that was the chief obstacle in the path of Ghazi Mustafa Kemal Pasha to the very end of this tragic tale. Discrimination was made against Muslim governments and populations in various other ways also, such as by the denial of self-determination to the Muslim populations of territories forcibly annexed or occupied and controlled by non-Muslim Powers. While all this was going on, Indian Muslim

opinion unrepresented at the Peace Conference, and represented before the Allies themselves only by unrepresentative Mussalmans, was vigorously suppressed in India by means of those well-known engines of tyranny and terrorism : the Press Act, the Defence of India Act, Regulation III of 1818 and, finally, the declaration of Martial Law in parts of India, over and above the abuse of the ordinary penal law of the land.

THE TIME WAS RIPE FOR RE-UNION

I have already declared it as my view that the bitter experience of ill-will against the Muslim States and populations abroad hastened the conversion of the Mussalmans to the view that to rely on this foreign and non-Muslim Government for support and sympathy, even after making every conceivable sacrifice for its sake was futile and that if they were in need of support and sympathy they must have a lasting, equitable settlement with the sister communities of India. The same course was clearly indicated by the betrayal of the Mussalmans of Eastern Bengal. And the time too was ripe for a Hindu-Muslim re-union. True partnership and association, whether in business, social relationship or in love, requires that there should be no great disparity between those that are to associate together as partners, friends or lovers. The same is true of politics. Union of the rich and the poor, of the old and the young, of the learned and the ignorant, is perhaps possible but far from common ; and it was a true instinct that guided Syed Ahmad Khan in opposing, a generation previously, the yoking together of the strong and the weak. During the controversy with regard to the Minto-Morley Reforms, however, Mussalmans had developed to some extent the quality of self-assertion so necessary in politics. But ever since the outbreak of the Tripolitan War they had had to struggle against the repressive policy of the Government, and it is not with a view to praise my own community that I say it has now to a considerable extent made up the distance between itself and the more advanced communities

of India by dint of forced marches which it had to undertake throughout this momentous period.

THE RAPPROCHEMENT

It was at my brother's suggestion and my own during our internment that in 1915 the Muslim League held its annual session at Bombay where the Congress was also to meet. Maulana Mazhar-ul-Haque, the veteran Congressman, who was nevertheless one of the founders of the Muslim League, and who had valiantly stuck to the Congress all these years in spite of the fact that the bulk of his community was still following the lead of Syed Ahmad Khan given thirty years ago, was now elected President of the Muslim League with great *eclat*. He was called upon to execute the mandate of his own community and bring about a joint meeting of the political leaders in the camps of the League and the Congress in order to adjust the future political relations of the various communities concerned. I hope Mr. Jinnah would soon come back to us soon. (*Cheers.*) I may mention that an infidel becomes a Kaffir and a Kaffir becomes an infidel; likewise, when Mr. Jinnah was in the Congress I was not with him in those days, and when I was in the Congress and in the Muslim League he was away from me. I hope some day we would reconcile. (*Laughter.*) Mr. Jinnah's persuasive advocacy was added to the vigour of the President, and last but not least, the audacious courage and vehement perseverance of that intrepid Muslim patriot, Maulana Hasrat Mohani, brought about the *rapprochement* which was to bear fruit in the following year on the historic Lucknow Compact. So rapid had been the progress of the Mussalmans that a mildewed critic from among their own community observed that Lord Sinha, the Bengali President of the Bombay Session of the Indian National Congress, had travelled thither by the same train as his Behari neighbour and brother-lawyer who presided over the Muslim League, and the two had borrowed one another's Presidential Addresses in order to compare notes. By some unfortunate mistake, Lord Sinha read out the halting and hesitating address of the ever loyal Muslim

while the ever loyal Muslim read out the piquant and pungent address of the ever disloyal Bengali. (*Laughter.*) But, said the critic with more wit than wisdom the two Presidents forgot to take back their own productions, and by an irony of fate Maulana Mazhar-ul-Haque had read to his Muslim audience as his own the pungent oration characteristic of the Bengali, and Lord Sinha had done likewise and read to the Congress delegates the cautious and halting address of the " ever-loyal " Muslim.

Government had now come to realise what would be the inevitable result of the Bombay *rapproachement*, and it is a matter of history how the Muslim-Leaguers were compelled to conclude *in camera* the session begun under such auspices. Thenceforward, the Congress and the Muslim League always met for their annual sessions at the same centre and worked in entire co-operation. The result was inevitable and could well have been foreseen. If the Congress President of the Ahmedabad Session was lodged in the Alipore gaol when he should have been occupying the Presidential Chair at Ahmedabad, the President of the Muslim League for the same year was indicted for waging war against the King at Ahmedabad itself on account of his Presidential address, and, even when acquitted by the unanimous verdict of the jury on that charge, was consigned to the Ahmedabad gaol after being convicted of sedition. It is a feather in the Muslim cap that while Srijut Das has brilliantly led the Swarajists to victory in Bengal and elsewhere, his Muslim *confrere* Maulana Hasrat Mohani is now sharing the honours of the Yerrowda gaol with Mahatma Gandhi, (*hear, hear,* sentence read smilingly) having in the meantime more than doubled his original sentence, in spite of the restricted opportunities for indulging in criminal practices that a prisoner's life affords, and has thus corrected the error of a blundering jury. (*Laughter.*)

MUSLIM REALIZATION OF LARGER INDIAN INTERESTS

But it was not only a case of safeguarding Muslim communal interests without leaning for support eternally on foreign Government and harbouring suspicions against

sister communities. Mussalmans would have been more than human, or less than that (means, less than human) if they had been indifferent to the continued injustice done to India and Indians collectively. Having been taught by their political preceptors in the past that Government could never for long leave a wrong unredressed, they had followed the policy of "wait and see." They had waited long, and yet all that they saw was a series of wrongs done to India—wrongs which remained unrepented and unredressed. Their patience was at last giving way and they were beginning to enlist as Congress members in annually increasing numbers. This was a hopeful indication of their realizing—I hope they realise it even to-day—that they had to protect not only their comparatively petty communal interests but also the larger Indian national interests, which were surely theirs to protect as those of sister communities. They now realized more than ever that by being Muslims they could not cease to be Indians. The Congress sessions of Calcutta, Bombay and Delhi had progressively justified the National appellation of the Congress. But it was reserved for General Dyer to break down entirely the barrier that Sir Syed Ahmed Khan had for temporary purposes erected more than thirty years previously, and to summon the Mussalmans of India to the Congress held at Amritsar in 1919 as the unsuspecting Herald of India's Nationhood. The bullets of his soldiery made no distinction between Hindu and Muslim, and clearly Providence had so designed things that a community even more loyal than the Mussalmans, namely, our brave Sikh brothers (*hear, hear*) should also die on the sacred soil of their religious capital at Amritsar with their own blood along with that of Hindu and Muslim martyrs. There is the Hand of God!

THE COMING OF THE MAHATMA

Much of the suffering undergone at Jallianwalla Bagh was, however, of a passive character, not invited nor cheerfully borne, of course, I exclude individual instances, and the terror that the proceedings of the administrators of Martial Law had created seemed at one time to have paralysed the people of the Punjab soon after they

had discovered their national identity through common suffering. But the Punjab was not left to sorrow alone. More than one patriotic Indian proceeded to the Punjab; but I feel confident they themselves would be the first to admit that I do them no injustice when I declare that the most historic event that took place during those eventful days was the "Coming of the Mahatma!"

The Mahatma's story is too well-known to you all, and now happily to a good many well-informed people outside India also, for me to recapitulate it here. His experiences in South Africa had taught him and I hope it will teach us even now and after so many years, to people like Mr. Sastri and Mr. Sapru that it was idle to expect justice for Indians overseas unless justice was done to Indians at home and India secured a government of her own. Gentlemen, I am not afraid here to proclaim to the world that, if necessary, I shall walk out of the British Empire. But I am not also ashamed of proclaiming to the same world that, if possible, I shall remain within the British Empire. This, of course, did not mean that the British connection must necessarily be broken; and even to-day not only he, whose forbearance is proverbial, but also followers of his like myself who cannot pretend to be equally forbearing, believe in spite of the bitter experiences of the last few years, that the truest Swaraj for India is not incompatible with the British connection if the British nation and the British Government only undergo a change of heart and make a *prayaschit* for the past. It was no doubt to deliver India from her bonds, spiritual no less than political, that the Mahatma had returned to the Motherland.

But the methods that he himself believed in and inculcated to his fellow-countrymen were not those that would be called "political" in the politics-ridden West. To him, as to all great teachers of mankind, Life was a single synthesis, however much we might analyse it for the convenience of philosophical study, and there

was no direct antithesis between the political and the spiritual.

JESUS AND ISRAEL: A PARALLEL SITUATION

Many have compared the Mahatma's teachings, and latterly his personal sufferings, to those of Jesus (on whom be peace); but the analogy goes farther than many have yet realised. Jesus was a Jew, and those who lovingly followed him acclaimed him as the Messiah of the House of David who had come to restore to the Israelites their long lost independence and power. Just as the "Tragedy of History" had been illustrated by the doom required by long-gathering guilt in the case of the Ten Tribes of the kingdom of Samaria, who were crushed and practically annihilated or dispersed by Assyria more than seven hundred years before the birth of Jesus, so was it illustrated again a century and a quarter later in the case of their no less guilty brothers of Judah when Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian, destroyed the Temple of Solomon, razed Jerusalem to the ground, and, making the Jews his captives, carried them into exile.

Ever since then the Israelites had dreamt dreams of revenge and restoration, and the victory of Cyrus seemed at one time to realise all that had been hoped. The re-building of the Temple had commenced, and after a temporary suspension resumed. Zerubbabel who was of the line of David, was the hope of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah the son of Iddo, who looked forward to the political regeneration of the Jews, consequent on the overthrow and destruction of "the kingdoms of the nations." The line of David was hoped to be restored in the person of Zerubbabel himself, and the Messianic predictions of earlier prophets thus fulfilled. This prediction was, however, not fulfilled at the time, and whatever became of Zerubbabel, who disappears with the coronation scene in Zechariah, he never wore a real crown nor sat upon the throne of his fathers.

Israel was destined never more to taste the sweets of independence; but whether under the yoke of Greeks

or of Romans, Israel never lost the hope of restoration. This is something for men like the Maharajah of Alwar to ponder over. (*Laughter.*)

The triumphal and often cruel entry of Greek and Roman civilization into Asia threw it back upon its dreams. More than ever it invoked the Messiah as judge and avenger of the people. A complete renovation, a revolution which would shake the world to its very foundations, was necessary in order to satisfy the enormous thirst for vengeance excited in it by the sense of its superiority and by the sight of its humiliation.—(Renan.)

Herod the Great who had contrived to secure some semblance of independence from Rome had died about the year in which Jesus was born, and "his three sons were only lieutenants of Romans, analogous to the Rajas of India under the English dominion."—(Renan). When during the childhood of Jesus, Archelaus, its ethnarch, was deposed by Augustus, the last trace of self-government was lost to Jerusalem. Judea was thenceforward part of a dependency of the province of Syria, which was governed by an imperial legate. A series of Roman procurators, subordinate in important matters to the imperial legate of Syria, of whom Pontius Pilate is so well known to Christian history, were constantly occupied in extinguishing the volcano which was seething beneath their feet. Continual sedition, excited by the zealots of Mosaism did not cease, in fact, to agitate Jerusalem during all this time. To cast down the Roman eagle, and destroy the works of arts raised by the Herods, in which the Mosaic regulations were not always respected, were perpetual temptations to fanatics who had reached that degree of exaltation which removed all care for life. The Samaritans were agitated by movements of a similar nature. The "Zelotes" or "Sicarii", pious assassins who imposed on themselves the task of killing whoever in their estimation broke the Law, began to appear. A movement which had much more influence upon Jesus was that of Judas, the Gaulonite, or Galilean. The Census which was the basis of taxation by the foreigner was hated as almost an impiety. That ordered in the sixth year of the Christian era had fully re-awakened the theocratic

abhorrence of Gentile government and had caused a great fermentation. In fact, an insurrection had broken out in the Northern provinces from which the greatest achievements of the Jewish people had always proceeded.

Men deemed themselves on the eve of the great renovation, the Scriptures, tortured into divers meanings fostered the most colossal hopes. In each line of the writings of the Old Testament they saw the assurance, and in a manner the programme, of the future reign, which was to bring peace to the righteous, and to seal for ever the work of God."—(Renan).

THE MORAL REVOLUTION OF JESUS

When Jesus contemplated the world at the outset of his ministry he was called upon to make his choice of the weapons of reform. The conditions of his people and his times, as I think, rather than any fundamental objection to the use of force in all circumstances, as Christian churchmen profess, made him pin his faith to non-resistance of evil. In other words, he decided to defeat force by his own suffering just as Husain subsequently did at Karbala, although the latter died sword in hand. But whatever view we may take of the choice of Jesus, it is certain that his fundamental idea was different from that of the political reformers of his time such as Judas the Gaulonite, whose example had shown him the futility of the popular seditions of his day. If ever he was the author of the disclaimer: "My kingdom is not of this world," he must have meant that he was not setting out to defeat Satan "the Prince of this world" with the help of Satanic weapons. He was not "worldly" in his methods; but this does not mean that he was "other-worldly." All that it signifies is that he was "unworldly". Having resisted the temptation to be a political revolutionary on the very threshold of his career as a Teacher, he never succumbed to it. The revolution he wished to effect was a moral revolution, and although he did not escape the fate of "rebels," and was placed on the Cross by order of Pilate with the description "King of the Jews", which is, in spite of its intended irony, significant of the Roman Procurator's political suspicions,

Liberty for him meant in the first instance Truth and Self-Purification. Renan was, to my mind, a typical Frenchman of his times for whom the claims of the State were paramount, and he could neither understand nor appreciate the thorough-going theocracy of Jesus, the "Servant of the Lord." Nevertheless, I agree with him in the conclusion that "as an austere republican or a zealous patriot he would not have arrested the great current of the affairs of his age; but in declaring that politics are insignificant, he has revealed to the world that one's country is not everything, and that the man is before, and higher than, the citizen." Vengeance which was consuming the Israelites was the Lord's. Jesus counselled the upholders of the *ex talionis* who claimed an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth that he who had been smitten on one cheek should turn the other cheek also to the smiter. So much for the foreign tyrant. As for his own countryman, and, I hope my own No-change friends would remember this also. The Jew, who, falling a victim to his own weakness and a fear of the Gentile masters of Judea, had become a publican or tax-collector on behalf of the foreigner, he too could easily claim a share in the abounding love of Jesus. The idea of being all powerful by suffering and resignation, and of triumphing over force by purity of heart, is as old as the days of Abel and Cain, the first progeny of Man. But since it so eminently suited the conditions of the times of Jesus, and the record of his ministry, however inadequate or defective, are still preserved for us this part of his teachings in some detail, it has come to be regarded by Christians and even by many non-Christians as an idea peculiar to Jesus.

JESUS AND GANDHI

Be that as it may, it was just as peculiar to Mahatma Gandhi also; but it was reserved for a Christian government to treat as felon the most Christ-like man of our times (*shame, shame*) and to penalise as a disturber of the public peace the one man engaged in public affairs who comes nearest to the Prince of Peace. The political conditions

of India just before the advent of the Mahatma resembled those of Judea on the eve of the advent of Jesus, and the prescription that he offered to those in search of a remedy for the ills of India was the same that Jesus had dispensed before in Judea. Self-purification through suffering; a moral preparation for the responsibilities of government; self-discipline as the condition precedent of Swaraj—this was Mahatma's creed and conviction; and those of us who have been privileged to have lived in the glorious year that culminated in the Congress session at Ahmedabad have seen what a remarkable and what a rapid change he wrought in the thoughts, feelings and actions of such large masses of mankind.

THE MAHATMA AND SATYAGRAHA

Mahatma Gandhi had been in direct touch with the Indian Government, had often counselled the Viceroy, and had continued his assistance to the British Government in its hour of need in South Africa by working as the unpaid recruiting sergeant of that Government in India. This had indeed amazed those who could not associate him whose life itself was a Sermon on the Mount with recruitment of blood-spilling soldiers. Yet even so loyal a subject and so staunch a friend was compelled to oppose a measure of that Government which no one reading British declarations of gratitude for India's loyalty in the early stages of the War could have conceived as the possible culmination of that gratitude at the end of that War. A Reform Scheme was under consideration professedly for enlarging the Indians' share in Indian administration. But while one hand was declared to be about to give a wider franchise to India, the other was already busy robbing her even of her narrowly-restricted liberties. This is what my brother and I wrote to Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy, from our internment at Chhindwara on the 24th April, 1919, when we were about to court imprisonment by breaking the Defence of India Regulations which had curtailed our liberties four years previously.

> The War is now over, but the spirit of tyranny that it generated is still abroad; and while, on the one hand, it is being proclaimed

in high-sounding phrases that those who are assembled at Paris to decide the destinies of the world on a more equitable and humane basis than Brute Force are not the masters of the People, but their servants, the Government, on the other hand, is denying to the people of India the barest expression on questions that vitally concern them. Not only is the gag not to be removed yet from our own mouths, but a gag of prodigious proportions has been prepared now for silencing more than three hundred millions of God's articulate creatures. The Rowlatt Bill just enacted in the most tyrannical manner has ended the reign of law and substituted a reign of terror in its place, and although it affects every section of the people of India, the Mussalmans are certain to be its first and its worst victims. It has been the Muslim Press that has suffered most under the Press Act, and the same has been true of the Defence of India Act, if we only exclude this unfortunate young men of Bengal rotting in solitary cells or swampy islands, without trial or hope of release. Even those who profess a pathetic optimism and hope against hope that the bureaucracy armed with the strength of the giant will not use it as tyrannically as the giant, need only have access to our own experience to be cured of this distressing decision. We, who have already had enough experience of "executive discretion" and of "investigating authorities" sitting *in camera*, farcically enquiring into undefined charges, and dealing with undisclosed "evidence" without the help of any code of procedure or law of evidence, submitting reports that cannot bear the light of day, and being finally dismissed as ignorant persons for all their pains, can claim to speak with some authority, and say that the Black Act is nothing more or less than the virtual outlawry of a fifth of mankind.

It was our privilege to point out to Mahatma Gandhi the real import and full scope of the Rowlatt Bills, soon after he commenced his famous Stayagraha campaign. This was the first dawn of the era of Non-Co-operation. The occurrences at Delhi, Amritsar and Lahore, and in Ahmedabad and other parts of Gujarat are matters of history, and although the Mahatma's admission of his "Himalayan error" has been proclaimed to the world by the Government, and the official and unofficial scribes who have been enlisted in its support, none seems to have had the honesty to admit that the Mahatma's blunder would have overtopped Everest if he had not then united his nation as he did in defence of its liberties. At the very worst the "Himalayan error" consisted in miscalculating the extent of the people's discipline and self-restraint. But if Mahatma Gandhi had left the Rowlatt Bills unchallenged,

he would have been guilty of a sin of which he could hardly have purged himself by any kind of expiation. Place all the violence of the infuriated mobs on one side, and on the other side place the cowardliness of a surrender to the slavery sought to be imposed on the nation by these Bills, and, in spite of my utter abhorrence of such violence, I say with all deliberateness that on the Day of Judgment I would rather stand before God's White Throne guilty of all this violence than have to answer for the unspeakable sin of so cowardly a surrender. (*Hear, hear, and prolonged applause.*) In saying this I am only applying to the situation four years earlier my chief's own admission in the court of the Judge who has ordered that for six years he should "be buried alive." "I knew," admitted the Mahatma, "that I was playing with fire." But he also added: "I ran the risk, and if I was set free I would still do the same"! If I am set free I am going to do the same. (*Laughter. Loud and prolonged cheers, cries of "God bless you!"*) Christ-like in his methods he has been Christ-like to the end. He had "steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem," and not even the prospect of the Cross could make him shrink from treading the path of duty. Now, I come to the very interesting part with regard to non-violence.

NON-VIOLENCE

I would like to re-state here the position of men like myself with regard to non-violence. I am not a Christian believing in the sinfulness of all resistance to evil, and in their practice, even if not in their theory, the vast bulk of Christians and all Christian States are in full agreement with me. (*Laughter.*) The last German War illustrated this. The German War was not won with non-violence. (*Laughter.*) The last War presented an excellent opportunity to these States and to Christians at large to demonstrate their belief in the doctrine of non-resistance, but we know that none of the States followed it, and the few Christians whose practice was not divorced from their professions were the "conscientious objectors" contemptuously called "conchies" (*laughter*)

who were subjected to ridicule and contumely and were punished like felons. But that was not all. Every national Church blessed the national Flag and sent the national warriors as on a Crusade. As a Mussalman and a follower of the Last of the Prophets (on whom be Allah's blessings and peace!), I believe that war is a great evil; but I also believe that there are worse things than war. "There is no compulsion in faith," says the Quran, and if any of my Moplah comes to you, please tell him that, my friends, because force and religious conviction have no common denominator. They belong to two very different planes. But when war is forced on a Muslim, and the party that does so has no other argument but this, then, as a Mussalman and the follower of the Last of the Prophets, I may not shrink, but must give the enemy battle on his own ground and beat him with his own weapons. This is my own creed. If he respects no other argument than force and would use it against me, I would defend my Faith against his onslaught and would use against him all the force I could command (*hear, hear*) —force without stint and without cessation. But when, in the language of the Quran: "War hath dropped her weapons," my sword must also be sheathed. Warfare, according to the Quran, is an evil; but persecution is a worse evil, and may be put down with the weapons of war. When persecution ceases, and every man is free to act with the sole motive of securing divine good will, warfare must cease. These are the limits of violence in Islam, as I understand it, and I cannot go beyond these limits without infringing the Law of God. I would recall this to my Hindu friends, particularly those at Allahabad. A little before our incarceration, I was addressing the District Conference at Allahabad, where there were many Hindu critics of mine—not in the conference itself, but in the newspaper, called *Leader*— and the group of politicians of which Mr. Chintamani was one of the distinguished members. (*Laughter.*) I said: "You are always asking me questions about the Afghanistan bogey, my creed about violence and so forth. Friends, I ask you for once to trust me and believe me." During

this last war, I was interned and confined as a State prisoner and I saw my Mussalman countryman going to war to fight against his Mussalman brothers, to despoil the Holy Land and give it to the infidel and in short, to fight against his own creed and conscience. They had not the courage to utter one word, and when they did utter, they were confined as State prisoners, interned or sent to jail. Newspaper securities were confiscated and there was utter demoralisation of my community. I have shed bitter tears. I have passed through fire. It is through my own sufferings that I have realised what your sufferings would be, if you were persecuted in your faith. This is the best guarantee I can give—that, because I respect my freedom of faith, I am bound to respect yours. As I said once, I did not know where India was. Vasco de Gama discovered the route to India by rounding the Cape of Good Hope. I discovered the route to India by rounding Mecca, Medina, Constantinople, Sufiz, etc. (*Hear, hear.*) At last the thing was driven home to me. And do you think it is possible for you, for any living creature of God, not to go through the same fires through which we went in these eventful years? That is the only guarantee I offer to you. Even to-morrow if India is to have Mussalman rule, I can never think of persecuting, and I do not think any one who has gone through those terrible years would think of persecuting a Hindu for his religion. (*Hear, hear.*) But I have agreed to work with Mahatma Gandhi, and our compact is that as long as I am associated with him, I shall not resort to the use of force even for purposes of self-defence. (*Hear, hear.*) And I tell you why. And I have willingly entered into this compact because I think we can achieve victory without violence; that the use of violence for a nation of three hundred and twenty millions of people should be a matter of reproach to it; and, finally, this is my third reason, that victory achieved with violence must be not the victory of all sections of the nation, but mainly of the fighting classes, which are more sharply divided in India from the rest of the nation than perhaps anywhere else in the world, even though our general is a Banya.

(*Laughter.*) Our Swaraj must be the Sarvaraj, the Raj of all, and, in order to be that, it must have been won through the willing sacrifice of all. If this is not so, we shall have to depend for its maintenance as well on the prowess of the fighting classes, and this we must not do. Swaraj must be won by the minimum sacrifice of the maximum number, and not by the maximum sacrifice of the minimum number. (*Hear, hear.*) Since I have full faith in the possibilities of the programme of constructive work of Non-violent Non-Co-operation, I have no need to hanker after violence. I do not even hanker after the Councils. (*Laughter.*) Even if this programme fails to give us victory, I know that suffering willingly and cheerfully undergone will prove to have been the best preparation even for the effective use of Force. (*Hear, hear.*) This is not the reason why I am doing it. Suppose we dissociate ourselves from Mahatma, and tread upon violence, even then, this appreciation for force is necessary. But, God willing, the constructive programme will not fail us if we work with a will and accustom the nation to undergo the small sacrifices that it entails.

WHAT SWARAJ DEMANDS FROM THE NATION

Here I may ask those of my fellow-countrymen who shrink even from these small sacrifices whether they have considered what it is that a soldier, a common soldier on rupees 15, who goes to battle is prepared to sacrifice. As the Bible tells us: "Greater love hath no man ..... than, that he lay down his life for his friend." Our own compatriots went to war for a cause not their own to the number of a million and a half. Can we who pride ourselves on the strength of our national feeling shrink even from the small sacrifices that Non-violent Non-Co-operation demands? But in reality our present programme is but the beginning of national work, and Swaraj when it is attained would require even greater sacrifices than those of a soldier. To die for a cause is after all not so very difficult. Men at all times and in all countries have done it, and they have often done it for very poor causes, whereas the last German war is not a very

poor cause! To die for a cause is not very difficult. The harder thing is to live for a cause, and, if need be, suffer for it, (*hear, hear*) and the cause that we must live and suffer for must be the realisation in India of the Kingdom of God.

VIOLENCE OF NON-CO-OPERATORS AND THEIR OPPONENTS CONTRASTED

These being my innermost convictions, I cannot help marvelling at the audacity of those that attribute to us a desire to involve the country in violence, carnage and anarchy. There, your Rushbrook Williams! (*Laughter*). They presume to demand from us who stand between them and violence an assurance of non-violence. And yet their own hands are red with the blood of the innocents shed in Jallianwalla Bagh—blood still as unrepented as it is unavenged. When the District Magistrate arrested me at Waltair, he took me to a small place where the police armoury was kept, and then he said: "I require from you security for good behaviour and for keeping peace." You know what I said in reply? I said: "I want one from you. You require security from me to keep public peace. I am actually keeping public peace, and it is you that are disturbing it." (*Prolonged laughter and cheers.*) We will make them repeat it. Contrast this patent insincerity with the frank acceptance by your chief of his full responsibility for Chauri-Chaura and the Bombay riots and you have the measure of the moral worth of Non-Co-operation and of its relentless opponents. The Mahatma's confession is proclaimed to the world by the Christian Government; but I wonder if this Government is also prepared to attribute to the Sermon on the Mount the slicing off by St. Peter of the ear of Malches! (*Laughter.*) Peter chopped off the ear of one Malches when Christ was about to be arrested. Was the Sermon on the Mount responsible for this bloodshed? After all we are all human beings, and not angels! Who knows how much blood might not have been shed by the disciples of the Prince of Peace if the census of arms taken by the Master had produced a tale of many more than two swords

and had his followers been more steadfast in their support of him than the self-same St. Peter who, according to the Gospels, denied him three times before cock-crow? We have not denied the Mahatma! When the guilt of Chauri-Chaura and similar unfortunate occurrences is being judged, it is necessary to take into consideration not only that which was done but also that which had been resisted. Never before in the annals of India have the people felt as intensely as they have done since the dawn of Non-Co-operation; did the people feel before, one-tenth as people of to-day? Even in those days when people like Mr. Gokhale led the country, did they feel so intensely as now? I have great veneration, I have great respect for Mr. Gokhale: I have the highest veneration for him: but he is not on the same plane as Mahatma Gandhi! and the marvel is not that the fury of the mob has resulted in so much bloodshed blood still as unrepented . . . but we make them repentant but that the manhood of India has been successfully revived with so little of it. I challenge any one to show another instance in the history of mankind where hundreds of millions of people have been roused to stand up for their liberties and have remained so peaceful as the people of India led by Mahatma Gandhi. (*Hear, hear.*) There is no country of Europe, with all its cold, frog blood, that would not have experienced a deluge of blood in like circumstances. That India has escaped such a deluge is due to Mahatma Gandhi and his co-workers. See the great martyrs in the Jallianwalla Bagh. See how our brave Sikh brothers who are a noble martial race have fully imbibed the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi and how to-day they are showing us an example of courageous and quiet suffering. Is there in the whole of the West anything like the sufferings of the Sikhs at Gurukabagh? They talk of Babbar Akalis. But there are only half a dozen of them and they have been trying to chase them from post to post, and are not able to catch them. I believe they are only half a dozen. I have heard a story that there is a community in the Sikhs who are not for this kind of purification that the Mahatma preaches. They don't give up their wine and other evils; they won't give up

crime and violence. One night about 5 or 6 of them went with a fortnight's rations to Gurukabagh where these poor starving people were remaining. As they were walking towards the place where these poor starving people were, the Police Superintendent who was on duty came out and said : " Go back, you, get back." One of these Akalis brought out a five chambered revolver and put it near the head of the Police Superintendent, and pointing it to him said : " Although I am a Sikh, I am an Akali ". Then the Superintendent said : " March on." The fortnight's rations were delivered and then he marched back. But they have been playing the easy game. If we really have resorted to violence, as my brother says, there is no better leader of guerilla warfare than Mahatma Gandhi himself. Great as non-violence is, it he took to violence his greatness is still there.

CO-OPERATION

In dealing with the question of Non-violence I have digressed and anticipated a good deal, and I must now revert to my narrative. I will only remind you,—even as recently as four years ago, there was tremendous delay at the Amritsar Congress on account of a quarrel, on account of a division, of which, I am sorry to say, Desabandhu Das was a party. And who was the other party? The Mahatma himself. Why? Because he could not be reconciled, he was for co-operation (*laughter*) and my friend, Desabandhu Das who is very true to his principles was for non-co-operation. (*Laughter.*) But he was for obstruction. (*Laughter.*) Mr. Tilak was supporting Mr. Das and as you can very well guess, Pandit Malaviya was supporting Mahatma Gandhi. (*Laughter.*) When I had arrived on the scene I was a tyro to my brother. The activities of my brother and myself were a worthy record. As the Bible says : " Blessed are the peace-makers." But I do not know now if we had any blessings yet. On that occasion we came to a compromise at last that we should try and use the Reforms as far as possible for the good of India, and if it was not possible, we should not use them at all. The Mahatma agreed to this. I only wanted to

show you how recent it is that the Mahatma has become a non-co-operator. He was a much later convert than we ourselves, even this violent brother who is 7 feet by 5 feet. No matter how much he may talk of non-violence, the very looks of the man betray him. His bulk comes under Section 121. (*Roaring laughter.*) Whatever may be in his soul, I am not quite sure that he has a soul (*laughter*),—but the body he possesses is nothing else but the whole of the Indian Penal Code rolled under one section. (*Renewed outburst of laughter.*) And yet, time after time, my big brother and I myself told Mahatma Gandhi that he was going too far in his mistrust of the English, and he said in reply : "Well, Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali, you must remember that I am only a recent convert and the zeal of a recent convert is always greater than that of those who are older in the faith—greater than the Assyrians." Up to the last minute, he was for co-operation with the Government, but when the time came when he could no longer co-operate with this Government, he non-co-operated with the Government. At the Congress at Amritsar the main resolution was concerned with the Reforms, and although only four years have passed since that session, it would surprise not a few to know that in the discussions over this resolution my friend Deshabandhu Das, the leader of the Council-entry party, and my late chief, Lokamanya Tilak, were entirely opposed to co-operation and the working of the Reformed Councils while Mahatma Gandhi had himself moved an amendment to that resolution. This was designed to commit the Congress to the principle of the co-operation of the people with the authorities in working the Reforms in response to the sentiments expressed in the Royal Proclamation. Neither side was willing to give way, and, as is usual on such occasions, the protracted discussions in the Subjects Committee were delaying the discussions in the Congress and prolonging the session. This was the first occasion, as I have already told you, on which I took part in the Congress, and for a novice my own contribution is not altogether undeserving of notice. My brother and I tried to discover a formula which could be acceptable both to

Mahatma Gandhi and to Lokamanya Tilak and Deshabandhu Das. We at last succeeded in this effort, and Srijut Bepin Chandra Pal moved, and I seconded, an amendment recommending to the Congress that "the provisions of the Reforms Act be used, as far as possible, with a view to secure full Responsible Government at an early date." This cleared the air, and finally both parties agreed to support a resolution declaring that "the Congress trusts that, so far as may be possible, the people will so work the Reforms as to secure an early establishment of full Responsible Government." It was with this addition that the Congress passed the resolution moved by Deshabandhu Das and seconded by Lokamanya Tilak, which declared India to be fit at the moment for full Responsible Government, characterised the Reforms Act as inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing and urged that Parliament should take early steps to establish full Responsible Government in India in accordance with the principle of self-determination. I have recalled these details only to show that even at Amritsar, Mahatma Gandhi and his co-workers were willing to co-operate with Government so far as was possible. And yet otherwise so entirely changed was the atmosphere at this session of the Congress that after my long separation from my people I could not help being greatly impressed by the change. The Hindus and Mussalmans were no longer enemies or even rivals, but were comrades and brothers in arms. There was no longer a plethora of set speeches suggestive of mid-night oil, "full of sound and fury signifying nothing." There was a new earnestness which indicated that the resolutions of the Congress were resolutions indeed, in the sense that the nation was *resolved* to act. And above all, it was clear that fear of fellow-man was no longer to be the compelling motive in India, and that the only fear this land would know in future would be the fear of God. So struck was I by this amazing change that I quoted in my speech at Amritsar the couplet of a fellow-townsman of mine who had said:

> One round of the wine cup was like a century long cycle of Time; when we left the tavern we found that the whole world had changed.

FROM CO-OPERATION TO NON-CO-OPERATION

But so far it was only a change in the character and outlook of the people. Their policy was, however, also destined to undergo an entire sea-change. And it was Mahatma Gandhi who at Amritsar was insisting on the people's co-operation with the authorities that was destined to be the first and, in the beginning, almost the sole advocate of Non-co-operation. What was it that had wrought this change of policy? I must confess my feelings towards this Government which had undergone a complete change during the War, and in particular since the Armistice towards the end of 1918. When now I read in the old files of the *Comrade* the publicly expressed expectations I had entertained from this Government not only at the commencement of the year 1911, but even as late as the end of 1914, it appears as if I was examining the newly discovered bones of an animal now altogether extinct. It is true that as late as in December, 1919, I had taken with regard to co-operation with the authorities, a middle position between Mahatma Gandhi on the one side, and Deshabandhu Das and Lokamanya Tilak on the the other which eventually became the position of the entire Congress. But I was even then not very hopeful of the possibility of such co-operation. I had seen only too clearly to what the co-operation of the Mussalmans with the authorities had led them. And I had likewise realised that what had happened at Jallianwalla Bagh, in the Crawling Lane, and at the Dak-Bungalow at Manianwalla was not a succession of unconnected incidents in which the thoughtless fury of the officials had suddenly vented itself, but a series of acts symptomatic of the disease from which this foreign bureaucracy was inevitably suffering. I was thoroughly convinced that this disease was congenital with the system, and if the system continued such incidents were bound to recur, and Government would inevitably be a succession of Jallianwalla Baghs unless the British underwent a complete change of heart. The Duke of Connaught, when he came out to India in the beginning of 1921 to open the Reformed

Legislatures, appealed to us to forget and forgive. I was, and still am, prepared to forgive; but forget I could not, and would not. To forget only means for the awakened sleeper to go back to sleep and to dream the pleasant dream he had been dreaming before he had awakened to the stern reality. But Mahatma Gandhi was not yet convinced of all this, and his conversion came a little later. For many months after the Amritsar session he continued to live in the hope that England would yet repent, and, while restoring the integrity and independence of the Khilafat, and evacuating the Jazirat-ul-Arab, England would redress the great wrong done to the people of the Punjab. In fact, it was not a mere hope that sustained him but an absolute conviction, and when he too was at last disillusioned, and would indicate in the process of preparing the programme of his constructive work a profound and thoroughgoing want of belief in the good intentions of England so that even we would suggest that perhaps he was going too far, he used to explain this by saying that he was a more recent, and therefore a more zealous, convert. When the last Petition that Muslim India addressed to England, through the Indian Khilafat Delegation in the interview that we had with the Rt. Hon. David Lloyd George, the ex-Premier of England, proved the utter futility of such appeals; and when the Punjab wrong was treated as an "error of judgment" to be rewarded by a pension paid out of India's poverty to the murderer of her innocent sons, and to the cold-blooded approver of this "error" who, enjoying the safety of a Government House surrounded by armed guards, had not even the justification of General Dyer, then Mahatma Gandhi lost all faith in co-operation between the rulers and the ruled.

NON-CO-OPERATION

Much has been said and written about Non-Co-operation and, if our opponents, or even some of our friends, would not understand its significance even now, I cannot hope to enlighten them in this address. I will, therefore, content myself with saying that briefly it means that if we may not resist evil, at least we

will not assist it. It is true we expect that if the Indian nation is prepared to make such sacrifices as Non-co-operation entails, this foreign Government would be absolutely paralysed. But although we do contemplate such a result, it is little more than incidental. Our movement, even though its name suggests that it is of a negative character, is in reality not so. It is essentially of a much more positive character. It does not directly aim at the paralysis of others; its direct aim is to remove our own paralysis. (Hear, hear.) We destroy schools and Colleges; but we build better ones where they teach us to fear God while they at present teach us only to fear man. We destroy Courts and set up Panchayats. And, if we destroy their Councils either by going in or remaining outside, we at least construct the Parliament of the Nation, called the Indian National Congress. (Applause.) Every item of the Non-Co-operation programme, with which I shall presently have to deal, has a strong constructive as well as a destructive side, and we shall stand or fall according as we succeed in our construction or not, mere destruction will not do. But if we do not destroy, or, in other words, if we continue to avail ourselves of all that the Government has constructed, for the continuance of its own existence, and as a trap for our destruction, we shall neither stand nor even fall, but shall absolutely cease to exist. Even if our direct aim was to paralyse the Government it was entirely compatible with the purest ethics, and even with the doctrine of Love associated with the name of Jesus Christ and now of Mahatma Gandhi. And I maintain that such a paralysis of Government is clearly possible. Friends, very early in my career as a gaol-bird I was struck with the system of co-operation followed in Indian gaols. Every prisoner gets a remission of a few days at the end of every month for "a clean bill of health" during the month; but some of the prisoners who succeed in winning the confidence and favour of the local gaol authorities are made watchmen, convict-overseers or convict-warders, and, besides enjoying other privileges during the rest of their prison life, they earn a more liberal remission

of their sentence every month. Every one in this Pandal who has passed through that gateway of freedom called prison—and, I trust, there are a good many present here to-day—is familiar with the work of the convict-overseers and warders who share the duty of keeping watch and ward during the night with the paid warders employed by the gaol administration. As a rule the few paid warders pass the night enjoying tolerably sound sleep, or, at the very worst, doze out their period of sentinel. But at the end of every half hour the gaol resounds with the cries of the prisoners who keep the real watch and ward. "All's well!" is repeated from every corner of the gaol, and so long as this continues the paid warders can sleep the sleep of the just. And, this, my friends, is the parable of co-operation. We have lost our liberties and are kept enchained through the services of others who are as much deprived of their liberties as we ourselves, except for a few petty privileges that they seem to enjoy. Yes, in Knighthood, now for instance, Sapru's! (*Laughter.*) Meanwhile the few foreigners who keep us in servitude can enjoy sleep and repose because the co-sharers of our servitude repeat from time to time from every corner of India's vast Bastille the reassuring cry, "All is well!" (*Laughter.*) The only difference is that whereas the convict-watchmen, overseers and warders can in this way at least secure their release from prison a little before their fellow-prisoners over whom they keep watch and ward, our co-operating friends, who are our comrades in slavery cannot look forward even to an earlier release. In fact, they have lost even the sense of slavery, and slavishly hug the very chains that keep them enslaved. (*Shame, shame.*) As I wrote in the prison itself:

> Leave off worrying for me, O, heedless fool; weep over thine own captivity; that which thou deemest to be an ornament is nothing less than a chain.

A QUESTION FOR MUSSALMANS

Friends, I feel certain, I have exhausted you as well as myself with this somewhat exhaustive historical

narrative, commencing with the Indian Mutiny and coming down to our own era of Non-Co-operation. (Cries of "No, no.") But in thus narrating past history I had an end in view. I cannot act the part of a dictator to any of you; and yet I want you to co-operate with me and not with my enemies. Possessing no such personality as the Mahatma's and being as unwilling to bind a spell over you as I am incapable of doing it, I could only lead you to the conclusions which after half a life-time of blindness and much blundering I have at last reached by demonstrating to you that our safest guide, the experience of several generations, inevitably leads us to the same. Experience must be our most cherished trophy, for it is a trophy made up of weapons that have hurt us. And here I appeal to the experience of my co-religionists in particular who are being diligently diverted from the path to which their history during the last sixty years and more has guided them. Granted that Non-Co-Operation has failed, and that co-operation with our non-Muslim fellow-countrymen is a vain hope, a snare and a delusion—though I am far from granting it except for argument's sake. Still we have got to suggest an alternative policy. I ask them not to accept my lead but to kick me out and to be in their turn my guide themselves. Whither could they lead me, that is now the question! If Non-Co-operation with our foreign masters and co-operation with Indian fellow-slaves of other faiths is not possible, what is the alternative that they have to place before us to-day? Are we to "progress backwards" till we begin to walk on all fours? Shall we co-operate with our foreign rulers and fight with our non-Muslim countrymen as we used to fight before? And if we do that what hope have we of any better results than we achieved for ourselves in the settlements after the Tripoli and the Balkan Wars, or, nearer home, in the unsettlement of a "settled fact" in Bengal? (*Laughter.*) No, friends, that book is closed and into it we shall look no more. (*Hear, hear.*) You have no alternative better than Non-Co-operation with the foreigner and co-operation with our neighbours, nor have I.

And it is futile to waste our time in worrying over the impossible. (*Hear, hear).*

MR. MONTAGU'S RESIGNATION AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

It is said that we can have no grievance now after the Treaty of Lausanne. You, friends, are in a better position to know how that Treaty came to be concluded than I who had to undergo for a year and a half solitary confinement in all but a technical sense, and have not been in touch with public affairs. But I have studied in some of the back numbers of the newspapers of those days something of what transpired in connection with the revision of the Treaty of Sevres while I was still in prison. You all know about the historic telegram despatched to the Secretary of State by the Government of India after consulting and receiving the general concurrence of the Local Governments, including their Ministers. You will agree that it fell far short not only of Muslim aspirations and sentiments, but also of the requirements of Islamic Law, since it did not say anything about the evacuation of the Jazirat-ul-Arab, and only recommended the Sultan's suzerainty over the Holy Places. In fact, the Government of India undoubtedly, even if haltingly, admitted all this when they said: "We are conscious that it may be impossible to satisfy India's expectations in their entirety," though Mr. Chamberlain had the impudence to say that "the terms far exceeded even the demands of the warmest friends of the Turks." And yet what a storm did the world witness over the publication of even such a telegram. The Secretary of State's resignation was demanded by the Premier, and the King Emperor "had been pleased to approve its acceptance." In other words, Mr. Montagu was ignominiously dismissed. As *Reuter* pointed out, "Mr. Chamberlain's announcement in the House of Commons was received with fierce welcoming cheers from the majority of the Unionists; and the 'Die-hards,' specially delighted, could hardly contain their satisfaction." "never before," said another message of *Reuter*," "Never before has the House of Commons re-echoed with such exultant cheering as greeted the announcement

of Mr. Montagu's resignation. It emanated from the Unionist benches, but was so loud and prolonged that it seemed general. Some enthusiasts even waved handkerchiefs." The most charitable explanation with regard to the attitude of Mr. Montagu's own party; and the party that is the rising hope of such Indians as still cling to the idea of receiving freedom as the gift of the foreigner, is contained in the earlier message of *Reuter* that "Liberal and Labour members received the news without an expression of opinion." To-day it may perhaps be urged that the Government of India are as anxious as the Muslim leaders themselves to arrive at a satisfactory settlement of the questions still at issue between Mussalmans and Great Britain. But of what good is that to us so long as the Government of India is only "a subordinate branch of the British Government six thousand miles away" whose "dictation to the British Government" as to what line it ought to pursue in such matters seems to Lord Curzon "quite intolerable." This is what Lord Curzon wrote to Mr. Montagu before giving him the sack" even though poor Montagu thought that he was only being let on with a warning. But evidently he had forgotten that at Denshawi there was flogging as well as hanging, and that Lord Curzon's final court could be trusted not to let off such criminals as he with a warning, but to warn and hang him also for the same offence.

Not one of those believing Mussalmans who is dissatisfied to-day with our policy of Non-Co-operation with Government and co-operation among the Indians could honestly say that Muslim Indian feeling received anything even approaching proper consideration at the hands of Great Britain. And yet hear what this former Viceroy of India, the same who posed as the benefactor of the Mussalmans in partitioning Bengal in 1905, has to say about our cry of anguish at the partitioning of the Khilafat fifteen years later. In his letter to Mr. Montagu he writes: "But the part India has sought to play or been allowed to play in this series of events passes my comprehension..... Is Indian opinion always to be the final court of Muslim appeal?"

In his speech before his Cambridge constituency Mr. Montagu had said :

> The Government of India were parties to the Treaty of Sevres. Had the Treaty produced peace the Government of India would have accepted it loyally; but when it showed, *as I always knew that it would show*, that it could not produce peace, the Government of India pleaded for its revision. I ask whether the Governments of Canada, South Africa or Australia would have remained silent when the so-called peace was destroying the internal peace of their country ?

Poor Mr. Montagu ! How easy it is, it seems, to forget that while the Governments of Canada, South Africa and Australia are national governments, the Government of India, over which Lord Reading still presides after the dismissal of Mr. Montagu, is not a national government at all. On the contrary, it is one which was bound to lock up for six long years the greatest leader that the nation had produced for many generations, in deference to pressure from the Imperial Government that had treated its partial support of his view in this affair with such open contempt. Dr. Sapru, too, had forgotten this patent difference between India and the Dominions, and had to be reminded of it at the Imperial Conference by the representative of a country once as distressful as our own namely Ireland. We had ourselves urged upon Mr. Montagu the very consideration to which he referred in his Cambridge speech ; but it was all in vain, and our advocacy of the same cause which the late Secretary of State advocated with equally little success was punished in various ways by the Government in India. Those who used to tell me on these occasions that Mr. Montagu was sympathetic had to be reminded that his sympathy had proved wholly sterile. I have always held that Mr. Montagu should have resigned on any one of at least half a dozen occasions even before his ultimate dismissal, and now he tells us himself that " he had been repeatedly on the verge of resignation, but he had hesitated *because he did not wish to say to the Mohamedans of India that the solemn pledges which had been made to them were irretrievably lost*". Irretrievably. . . that's the confession of the

Secretary of State for India. Nevertheless, his resignation *had* to come at last, and to-day he is not only not in the Government, but not even in the House of Commons. Can we then draw from all this any other conclusion than this, that "*solemn pledges which had been made to us are irretrievably lost*"? But no, Mr. Montagu may say that, but I will not say that they are not *irretrievably* lost. Friends, with the assistance of God, and your whole-hearted co-operation, we will yet retrieve them, or perish in the attempt. (*Hear, hear.*)

ENGLAND AND LAUSANNE

This treaty is said to be a treaty of Friendship. We shall presently examine it. This was in March, 1922, and although we were promised that due weight would be given to Indian opinion, I ask you to consider what was the attitude of England when six months later the brave Turks, relying not upon the promises of Great Britain, but upon God's grace and their own self-sacrifice and courage, drove Britain's brutal nominees into the sea? You all know that better than I do, and I do not propose to detain you over that. Beaten on the field of battle, beaten, I say advisedly, England now sought to deprive the Turks of the fruits of victory on the conference-table of diplomacy. But here, too, God helped those who helped themselves, and the Treaty of Lausanne proved that the Turks were not only warriors but statesmen as well. Let us hear what Lord Curzon has to say himself of the reasons that brought about the Treaty of Lausanne. Did the English who had commissioned Greece after the Armistice to rob the Turks of Thrace and even of their home-lands in Asia Minor; who were at one time actually considering the question of handing over Constantinople to them; and who had appealed in vain to the Dominions to fight their battle against the now victorious Turks when India could no longer be trusted to make cannon-fodder of her sons after the Karachi Trial—did the English even now repent or relent? The difference between the conditions under which other treaties, including that of Sevres, were imposed and those in which the Lausanne Settlement was arrived at was

pointed out by Lord Curzon at the Imperial Conference in the following words: —

Such (dictation of terms at the point of the bayonet) had been the case with all the previous post-War treaties. These had in each case been drawn up by the victorious Powers, sitting, so to speak, on the seat of judgment, in the absence of the culprit, and imposing what penalty or what settlement they chose. Only when the terms had been drawn up was the beaten enemy admitted to be told his sentence and to make the conventional protest of the doomed man. Such, indeed, was the environment in which the original Treaty of Sevres was drawn up and signed, though never ratified by the Turkish representatives. For otherwise was it at Lausanne. There the Turks sat at the table on a footing of equality with all the other Powers. Every article of the Treaty had to be debated with and explained to them. (Look, what great injustice to poor Great Britain !) Agreement had to be achieved not by brandishing the big stick but by discussion, persuasion and compromise. (This is what Lord Curzon had to confess. Could there be any higher punishment than death ? Such men have been killed by our own men !)

Commenting upon Lord Curzon's defence of the Treaty of Lausanne and of his praise of Allied diplomacy, which was, according to him, reluctant to break up the Conference on important, but not vital, points, and to revert to a state of war, an Indian newspaper, the *Leader*, which is not noted for any excess of sympathy with the Turks, wrote as follows :—

No credit can be given to such pacific and discreet diplomacy when it was based on unwillingness to fight. As Lord Curzon said, " the Turks knew very well that the Allies had no stomach for further fighting ; on the contrary, they were very nervous about the bellicose temper of the extremist elements among the Turks." " The Allies were never certain," said the Foreign Secretary, " how far the genuine desire of the leading Turks for peace would control the unruly Nationalist and extremist elements." It will thus appear that the Turks obtained what they wanted literally at the point of the sword and the role of the conquerors and the conquered was reversed at Lausanne. It was the Turks who dictated the terms of the Treaty, and the Allies, who dictated the terms of the other post-War treaties, had to accept them.....As a matter of fact the big stick was brandished by the Turks at Lausanne and the Allies " made the conventional protest of the doomed man". Replying to the severe criticism of the Treaty by those " whose motives in making the attack are not free from citicism", he (ie., Lord Curzon) said that " it was the best treaty that could be obtained in the circumstances". (*Laughter*).

Thus it is once more clear that the Turks secured what they did at Lausanne not because of any regard on the part of England for justice to the Turks, or for the religious obligations and sentiments of Indian Mussalmans with regard to the Khilafat, but in spite ot England's open hostility towards the Turks and utter disregard of the requirements of Islam. Lord Curzon would have once more brandished the big stick; but, sad to relate, it had changed hands.

I have purposely dealt exclusively with a matter concerning the special interests of Mussalmans and affecting their extra-territorial sympathies, for it is obvious that the treaty of Lausanne, far from settling our national affairs and satisfying our national requirements common to all Indian communities, does not even settle the peculiarly Muslim and religious issue of the Jazirat-ul-Arab. But after all, the issues that are our common national issues far exceed in number those that concern the Mussalmans alone. All that the Treaty of Lausanne has done is to declare that the Turks have not lost their Swaraj as we had done more than a century ago, and as they themselves were were within an ace of doing. The Khilafat Committee's demands, and, in, particular the religious requirements with regard to the Jazirat-ul-Arab, still remain unsatisfied. But even if all this had been done, could the Mussalmans give up Non-Co-operation with Government and co-operation, with other Indian communities? In the first place, that would be an unspeakably shameful breach of faith with their non-Muslim brethern of whose help they have so willingly availed themselves. And, in the next place, Indian Mussalmans would be proving that, while they were so anxious for the security of the Turks and the Arabs' Swaraj, they were indifferent to their own! Well could it, then, be said of them:

> Hast thou arranged the affairs of the earth so well that thou meddlest in those of heaven as well?

THE TERRIBLE ALTERNATIVE TO NON-CO-OPERATION

Friends, once more I have perhaps exhausted your patience; (cries of No, no) but my excuse for it is that I

want the Mussalmans who are being asked to-day to discard the policy of Non-Co-operation with England to confront facts before they reverse a decision to which their sad experiences of co-operation with England had driven them. It is as clear as daylight that so long as India is not an equal partner with England and the Dominions in the Empire, and so long as her Government is but "a subordinate branch of the British Government six thousand miles away," we cannot be satisfied with the goodwill of the Government of India even if it is proved to the hilt. Besides loyalty to a foreign Government there are other loyalties as well, and so long as Mussalmans in India are liable to be punished for disloyalty to Government because they are loyal to their God and to His Last Prophet, as we ourselves were punished at Karachi, and so long as the Holy Land of Islam is under the control of non-Muslim mandatories when we ourselves had been given God's own mandate for it by His Last Messenger as a deathbed injunction, there is no alternative to Non-violent Non-Co-operation but one, and that, friends, is the terrible alternative of war! Since the vast bulk of those who try to discredit our policy do so because they are slaves to the fear of Government, and, being unwilling to make *any* sacrifice, could not even dream of adopting that terrible alternative, let us hear no more of a change of policy!

MUSLIM CO-OPERATION WITH NON-MUSLIMS

And if we may not co-operate with Great Britain is it expedient, to put it on the lowest plane, to cease to co-operate with our non-Muslim brethren? What is it that has happened since that staunch Hindu, Mahatma Gandhi, went to gaol for advocating the cause of Islam that we must cease to co-operate with his co-religionists? I know that Hindu-Muslim relations to-day are not precisely those that they were two years ago. But is it possible for any honest and truly patriotic Indian to say that either community is wholly blameless, and that the guilt is entirely one community's? Friends, I do not believe in diplomacy, and certainly not in that variey of it which is called secret diplomacy. I do not wish to

imitate Sir Roger de Coverley, and put you off with the diplomatic dictum "Much can be said on both sides of the question." Most regrettable events have unfortunately occurred in Malabar, at Multan, at Agra, at Saharanpur, and elsewhere, and I am prepared to support the creation of a National Tribunal to judge the respective guilt of the two communities. For it cannot be gainsaid even by the community that has suffered the most that complaints have been made by members of the other community as well, and obviously it would neither be fair nor productive of any satisfactory result if either community is saddled with all the guilt and denounced without an adequate enquiry. I did not shrink at Delhi from proposing the appointment of a truly representative Committee of Enquiry; but for reasons which it is not necessary to state here no result has yet been achieved of such a committee's appointment. Two things are, however, patent. The law courts established by Government cannot stop their work while we adjudge the guilt of the two communities. And while it is difficult to arrive at the truth by a national enquiry *after* witnesses have given their testimony, true or false, on oath before the courts of law of the Government, reconciliation itself, which is even more important than the investigation of the truth, is not made easy by the punishment awarded to those who are found guilty by such courts, not un-often on evidence which is not free from suspicion.

THE SUREST REMEDY

What then is to be done? I have already told you that to accept the version of one party is neither fair, nor would it help us in creating in the other party whose version was disbelieved without any enquiry a disposition towards reconciliation and reform. The only remedy that I can suggest for instant adoption is also the surest, and it was this which was all but adopted towards the end of our discussions at Delhi in the Committee appointed to consider this question. Even after we had decided that a Committee of Enquiry should visit the places where regrettable incidents had followed Hindu-Muslim dissensions, and after we had even nominated the members of this

Committee, we were within an ace of cancelling all this because we noted at a later stage of our deliberations a welcome change in the attitude of the leaders on the two sides. There was now a desire to let bygones and heartily co-operate for the attainment of Swaraj, as they had been doing two years previously. Obviously, the protagonists on the two sides had once more had a glimpse of that unity of which the Mahatma was at once the chief preacher and the best symbol, and the prospect of gaining party-victories once more appeared mean and contemptible in their eyes. But a difference arose on a petty issue and they parted again. Friends, I pray that God may grant them once more a glimpse of that unity, and that this time it may not be as fleeting as it had been before. Nay, I pray that they may keep ever before them a picture of that unity and the glorious vistas of that freedom which can be seen only through the avenue of national unity, so that all else that is of fair seeming, but which is associated with slavery, may lose its charm for them and be blotted out for all eternity.

THE PETTINESS OF DISTURBING ISSUES

At Delhi when the protagonists of the Shuddhi movement were about to settle the matter and when the matter was about to come to a final understanding, the thing had broken on some small matter. Believe me, it is not by tawdry, tinselled rhetoric that I hope to settle such vital issues. But, although the issue of Hindu-Muslim unity is vital, and, in fact, the most vital that we have to settle, the issues which disturb that unity are contemptibly petty. Nothing makes me more ashamed than the pettiness of these issues, and I confess I find it difficult to refute the calumny of our enemies that we are unfit for Responsible Government when I contemplate their potency for mischief side by side with their pettiness. Far be it from me to sneer at the modes of worship of my fellow-men; but I feel unspeakably depressed when I think that there are fellow-countrymen of mine, including my own co-religionists, who would jeopardise the recovery of our lost liberty, including religious liberty itself, for the sake of the

satisfaction they seem to derive out of cutting a branch of Pipal tree overhanging a public thoroughfare and interfering with the passage of a pole of ridiculous length, or out of beating tom-toms and blowing trumpets before a house of worship at prayer-time while moving in a procession. Friends, if we cannot acquire a better sense of proportion let us be honest, at least with ourselves if not with others, and give up all thought of freedom. We must not talk of Swaraj even within the Empire, let alone out of it. What is Kenya to slaves like us or we to Kenya? Why need we hanker after a place in the King-Emperor's palace when we are not even fit for a place in his stables? (*Laughter. Cries of 'shame, shame.'*) And what is it to us if the Holy Land of Islam should attract many a casino and *cafe chantant*, or the new warden of the Mussalmans' Holy of Holies should become one of the long tale of impotent potentates maintained by an Imperial Government only to be pushed off their ancestral thrones whenever they should forget themselves and think that God has made them men and not merely puppets in an Imperial show. If *alams* and *pipal* trees and noisy processions are our "horizon's utter sum", then all our Congresses and Khilafat Committees are mere mockery.

Let us ring down—the farce is nothing worth.

Let us close this chapter of childish make-beliefs, and taking the first train back home, let us devote ourselves henceforward to the realisation of the ideal of petty self-concern which alone befits a nation of slaves. Let us at least not take the sacred name of Liberty in vain. Let us add our confession to the claim of our opponents, and admit that God, Whom the great religious teachers of the East in which all the existing religions have had their source, had taught us to regard, just, has yet been so unjust to a fifth of mankind that He has made them totally unfit for self-rule, and has left it to His White creatures hailing from Europe to correct His mistake, and carry on for all time the administration of India. But if we do not want to drag our spiritual ancestors into the mire along with ourselves and to blaspheme a just God, let us elevate

ourselves to the height of our ideals and lift the masses instead of sinking down to their low level.

THE ROOT OF EVIL

But since I have referred to the low level of the masses, let me say this much for them that what I wrote in 1904 in criticising the education given in the Indian universities is still true, and even to-day (this is what I wrote,) "the greater portion of bigotry agitates not the bosoms of the ignorant and the illiterate but excites to fury and to madness the little-learned of the land." And it is not the love of our own religion that makes us quarrel with our fellow-countrymen of other faiths, but self-love and petty personal ambition. "The coming of the Mahatma" has meant the destruction of "the kingdoms of the nations" and the foundation in their place of the one united Kingdom of the Nation to be the Congress whose Chief Servant was his great glory. But these little "kings" who had lost their little "thrones" were not reconciled to the idea of national service under the banner of the Nations' Chief Servant, and were pining for restoration. You have heard what Milton said with regard to Self-rule: "Better to live in Hell than to serve in Heaven.' These petty people who want to rule India to-day would better recognise this. Better to be privileged to be cooks than to be bulls' tails. So long as Mahatma Gandhi and his principal co-workers were free, they had not the courage to raise the standard of revolt, and there was no room for them in the economy of the Indian world except as openly despised slaves of the foreigner or as secretly discontented adherents of the National Federation. And so they chose the latter alternative. But, with the Mahatma immured at Yerrowada, they reasserted themselves, and since they could not hope to occupy his position, they have persistently, though not professedly, addressed their appeals to communal passions and jealousies in order to destroy the National Federation and hasten the recovery of their petty principalities. Before the advent of Mahatma Gandhi several streams, some large and some small, were running more or less parallel to each other, and

little boats were being rowed on them. I was in one of them. But soon after his advent, almost all of them were directed into one channel and became tributaries of a mighty river rapidly moving on to join the sea. On the broad bosom of this Ganges there sailed a powerful ship, manned by lusty sailors, captained by the Mahatma and flying the National flag, which I had the honour to unfurl to-day. What the petty ambitions of petty men have been urging ever since the Mahatma's incarceration is that we should scrap the big ship and take to the little row-boats again. But since these little boats are not safe enough craft for the mighty river hurrying on towards the sea, they propose a revolution in Nature itself, and ask that the great river should flow back into its old tributaries. (*Laughter.*) But Nature cannot be thwarted, and the futility of the desire to make the Ganges flow backwards is a thing known even to our village fools. When party questions came up, I acted in the name of the Congress. When such questions come up and I am asked to settle, if I can do so I do it in the name of the Congress. You will have to tell me whether I can do it or not. In the name of this Congress, and of the Indian Nation, nay, even in the name of that Destiny which shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we may, I warn this little breed of men that, God willing, they will never succeed, and that the Indian Nation cannot look upon their insidious activities with unconcern.

TOLERATION AND FRATERNAL SELF-SACRIFICE

Friends, to punish the guilty is not without its advantages even in the domain of politics; but the surest remedy for political disunion is, as I have already suggested, to create on all sides a disposition to forget and forgive. But this is not all, and if we desire to prevent a recurrence of regrettable incidents we must remove the causes of friction. Conformity in all things is only too often desired, and this not only by the bigots, but also by some of the most large-hearted of men. Religious reformers have at all times betrayed a fatal weakness for comprehension or the preparation of a religious compound formed of many simples gathered from many different sources. They have

hoped that by adopting a policy of inclusion they would be able to form a faith embracing doctrines culled from diverse faiths and acceptable to all the followers of all these faiths. That is how they hope to attain Uniformity and secure Conformity. But history has shown that the cause of peace and unity has not been greatly furthered by the formation of such eclectic faiths. Only too often have they added one more to the warring creeds existing before and have only increased the disunion they were creating. Such well-intentioned failures have at last made people fall back upon Toleration. This is not the indifferentism and absence of strong convictions which often pass for toleration, but a far more positive principle in life which co-exists with beliefs passionately held. I could not define it better than by quoting an American who declared to a fellow-countryman of his holding very different views to his own. "I strongly disagree with every word of what you say; but I shall fight, Sir, to the last drop of my blood for maintaining your right to say it!" That, friends, is the best definition of Toleration. The Quran which calls upon Mussalmans even to fight in defence of their Faith whenever their freedom of faith is assailed or jeopardised, sums up its teaching on tolerance in the words, "To you your faith, to me mine." If we all agreed to act upon this principle, and at the same time emphasised the features common to different faiths and the spirituality characteristic of all there would be no strife in the world but peace and tranquillity everywhere.

APPLICATION OF THIS PRINCIPLE TO OUTSTANDING ISSUES

Let us apply this principle to some of the outstanding issues between the various communities of India. If for instance, processions can be taken out on public roads and no objection is taken to music being played thereon, a Mussalman should not object to a procession with music taken out by Hindus, or by other non-Muslim neighbours of his, unless it interferes with his own exercise of some recognised right such as conducting Divine Service in a fitting manner. If again, a long pole can be carried in

procession through the streets without danger to life and limb, no non-Muslim should object to it if it is so carried "with musical honours." But then the Muslims indulging in such practices, which are to say the least of it, of doubtful religious validity, have no right to demand that a non-Muslim neighbour of theirs should permit the looping off the branches of a tree which he holds sacred, whether with reason or without it, and which is growing on his land and is his property. If there is no law against smoking in public places, no Parsi should object to a non-Parsi's lighting a cigarette in a street even though he himself holds fire to be too sacred an element to be defiled in this way. Similarly, if it is no offence to slaughter animals, and a man kills a fowl, or a cow, or a pig, or kills any animal to provide food for himself or for others or for sacrificial purposes or in a particular manner not involving cruelty to animals, his neighbour should not object to it on the ground that he holds all life too sacred to be destroyed, or that he looks upon the cow as upon a mother, or that he considers a pig too unclean to be eaten, or that he is required by his own religion to kill animals in a different manner to his neighbour's. In all these cases it is, of course, presumed that the animal slaughtered is the property of the man who slaughters it or causes it to be slaughtered, and not his neighbour's whose property he may not unlawfully seize and use or destroy. But we have not, alas, reached a stage of toleration in India when the free exercise of his right by one of us can escape being resented by some others. In fact, the worst of it is that some of us, while they insist upon the exercise of their right, sometimes exercise it with the desire to annoy their neighbours, and in a manner that is sure to annoy them. The jeering at men of other faiths when one is taking out a procession required or sanctioned by our own faith, the beating of tom-toms and playing other instruments, which often produce more noise than music, with special vigour before a house of worship of another community, and particularly when Divine Service or some other religious rite is in progress and is likely to be thereby disturbed; the needless lopping off of trees held sacred

by Hindus which overhang public thoroughfares, or doing it in an exultant manner; the blowing of cigarette smoke in the face of, or too close to a Parsi or a Sikh; the wanton destruction of a good deal of animal life in the sight or immediate neighbourhood of Jains; carrying a garlanded cow in procession through a locality inhabited by Hindus as well for purposes of slaughter; or slaughtering it in a place where Hindus cannot help seeing it—these and many other such are things that occur only too frequently whenever there is a tension of feeling between the communities concerned. And provocation and insolent exultation of the nature described above often lead to hot words, and not seldom to blows which sometimes end in loss of human life.

HOW TO DEAL WITH SUCH MATTERS

There can be no measure sufficiently comprehensive to safeguard public tranquillity and peace in all such cases, and I can think of no National Pact embracing all such situations, even if it is permitted to assume inordinate proportions, and to include details that must make us the laughing-stock of the world. The best remedy, I must repeat, is the creation of the correct spirit in which the different communities exercise their rights. But it is possible for a national body such as the Congress to deal with some of the principal causes of friction and to remove them by bringing about an agreement between leaders of the communities concerned. And this it must do. But, while attempting to influence public opinion, and to regulate public action through the agency of such leaders, with courage and confidence, a body like the Congress must be careful not to demand from any community that it should relinquish any rights which may, in the present circumstances involve a sacrifice, far beyond its capacity. It must be remembered that Swaraj, although it is our destined goal, and is soon likely to be in sight, has yet to be won, and before it is won we have no sanctions of which we can make use like a Government. We must depend exclusively upon persuasion and example. But even if we had a

Government of our own, it could not rightly, or even successfully, compel large sections of the people to give up the exercise of any right unless it provided for them corresponding facilities in some other direction.

COW-KILLING

The question of cow-killing is an instance in point. I know how sacred a cow is in the eyes of my Hindu brothers, and who knows better than my brother and myself how anxious our absent Chief was to secure its preservation? His action in so selflessly leading the Khilafat movement was no doubt characteristically generous and altruistic; but he himself used to say that he was trying to protect the cow of the Mussulmans, which was their Khilafat, so that this grateful community which had learnt from its Scriptures that there could be no return for kindness, would be induced to protect his own cow in return. This was however, only Mahatma Gandhi's way of emphasising his love for the cow. And even before he so picturesquely called the Khilafat our cow, my brother and I had decided not to be any party to cow-killing ourselves. No beef is consumed since then in our house even by our servants, and we consider it our duty to ask our co-religionists to act similarly. As for sacrificing cows, my brother and I have never done it, but have always sacrificed goats, since a sacrifice of some such animal is a recognised religious duty. Much can be done in this way, and we have learnt by experience during the three or four years following the Hindu-Muslim *entente* and co-operation that it is not difficult to reduce cow-sacrifice, even before Swaraj is won, to insignificant proportions.

But much as I desire that even ordinary cow-killing throughout the year for the purpose of providing food should be altogether discontinued, or, at least reduced to similarly meagre proportions, I am only too conscious of the fact that in looking forward to an early realisation of my wishes I am hoping against hope. Mussulmans in India who can afford to purchase the dearer mutton eat beef only on rare occasions. But for the poorer towns-folk among the

Mussalmans it is the staple food. Coming from the centre of Rohilkhand, or the land of the Rohillas, I know how difficult it is for them to discontinue the use of beef in the present circumstances. The Pathan cannot suppress his surprise when he comes across people in India who "eat corn with corn"; and Rampur wags say: "Let there be meat, even if it be a dog's." When following the fashion of British Indian Municipalities, Rampur also closed many meat shops and opened in their place a central Meat Market, it was found difficult to cope with the demand for beef, and so disastrous proved the results of a keen competition for the reduced supply that the *Markeet*, as it used to be called, was now descriptively rechristened *Marpeet*? In the case of this class of Mussalmans the use of beef is at present a more or less acutely felt economic necessity.

The only safe and sure way of stopping cow-killing in this case is to take steps to lower the price of mutton which is prohibitively high, and thus reduce the very large margin that there is at present between the prices of mutton and beef. I am far from desiring that the cost of living should be still further increased for any section of this impoverished land, not excluding my own community, which is admittedly one of the poorest; but I cannot help pointing out that by far the most numerous owners of cows are the Hindus, and that if they did not sell cows after they had ceased to give milk, there would be much less cow-killing than there is to-day. Even now we can encourage goat and sheep breeding in order to save the cow, but when we can frame our Budgets for a Swaraj Government it should be a comparatively easy matter to utilise a considerable portion of the savings from Military expenditure for the same purpose. Nevertheless I appeal to my co-religionists even to-day to discontinue the use of beef and not to wait until Swaraj is won when their sacrifice would be worth much less. The Joint Family system of India and not the free competition of the Manchester School must be our social and political ideal for India's different

communities. But if there is to be competition among the communities that form the Indian Joint Family, let it be a competition in forbearance and self-sacrifice, and I maintain that the community which willingly surrenders more of its cherished rights and strongly-entertained sentiments for the sake of sister communities and the peace and harmony of India will prove the most invincible in the end.

ADJUSTMENT OF COMMUNAL SHARES IN REPRESENTATIVE BODIES AND IN THE ADMINISTRATION

I have already explained to you what I think about the main cause of communal quarrels and the share of the educated classes in misleading the masses and using them in order to serve their personal ambitions. But matters like cow-killing and processions with music are not the only things that provide sources of friction. The adjustment of communal shares in representative institutions, local, provincial and All-India, and in the administration also, gives rise to bitter communal dissensions, and here it is clearly impossible to shift the blame on to the masses. Once more personal ambitions well or ill disguised as communal interests, play a great part, and specious phrases, such as greater efficiency and superior educational qualifications, are used to cover the injustice intended. This is all the more surprising because similar pretexts when put forward by the bureaucrats are mercilessly exposed by the self-same people. Since this fallacy of the higher efficiency of monopolists has not yet received its quietus, I am compelled to say that the intelligence of the few can never be a proper safeguard of the interests of the many. And when people are not actuated by motives of broad-minded patriotism, the superior intelligence of one group or section cannot but be regarded by other groups and sections as a rather dangerous possession. It may, however, be that even where the motives are pure they are none the less suspect. That, friends, is our *karma*, the legacy left by the injustice of past generations, and instead of taking undue offence, we must live down such reputations. In politics as in business credit has first to be established,

and a good balance-sheet and a moderately good dividend are far more useful in the long run than the most attractive prospectus. We could have gone much farther on the road to Liberty and Self-Rule if minorities had been quite sure of the company which they were being invited to join. But the common platform of the Congress has now provided an excellent opportunity to all of us to prove the patriotic character of our motives, and however long it may be before we succeed in establishing our credit, nothing can be done without it; and losing our temper over unmerited suspicions, or hustling those who entertain them and trying to jockey them into an expression of confidence that they do not yet feel in us, is poor business.

The Lucknow Compact which forced the hands even of the bureaucracy and compelled it to agree to such poor Reforms as have been doled out to India would in all likelihood suffice for the present for such of us as have decided to enter the Legislatures; and even if it does not, this should spur us on, to quicken the pace and try to reach our national destination of Swaraj all the earlier so that we may re-adjust communal shares in representative bodies. Friends, let me tell you frankly that I do not consider it likely that for some time yet we can afford to dispense with separate electorates. But I can assure you no one would rejoice more than myself on the day that the minorities themselves announced that they needed no such protection. It may perhaps help you to judge of my *bona fides* in this matter if I tell you that I had strongly urged the adoption of the Indian plan for the protection of the Christian minorities in the Eastern Vilayets of Turkey known as Armenia.

But two intermediate steps may be taken before we abolish separate electorates altogether. The first is that the minorities should be free to elect any Indian as their representative. I shall deem it a great honour the day a non-Muslim minority elects me in preference to its own members to represent it in the national assembly. And I know of no Muslim to whom I could give my vote

with greater confidence than to that great Khilafatist, Mahatma Gandhi.

Another step that we could well take would be the progressive creation of mixed electorates, gradually to replace separate electorates. Some of you may perhaps remember that I had opposed the Rt. Hon. Syed Ameer Ali who did not wish to risk any seat by agreeing to the retention of some mixed electorates, and wanted safe, even if fewer, seats for the Mussalmans when the Minto-Morley Reforms were being discussed. As intercommunal relations improved the number of seats thrown open for contest in mixed electorates may be increased and those allotted to separate electorates decreased, till all come to be contested in mixed territorial electorates. The same policy should be adopted in throwing administrative posts open from communal to general competition.

All the foregoing considerations have to be kept in view in dealing with the composition of local bodies where, although the issues may often be petty, the passions of the people concerned are more liable to be excited.

A sad enough confirmation of this is furnished by the unfortunate dissensions in the Punjab over the distribution of municipal seats. The conditions in that province sometimes make me wonder whether Jallianwallah Bagh and the Crawling Lane are really situated in the Punjab.

MENTAL MYOPIA

In the short passage which I quoted in the earlier part of this address from another address of mine, delivered as long ago as in 1904, I had warned my audience against placing any reliance on the "misleading unity of opposition," and I would be the last person to believe that we can remain a united people merely by feeding on the memory of Martial Law terrors. Many a coalition formed in Opposition and adversity has broken down after the first flush of victory at the polls and in the very first days of Government, and if Swaraj is not only to be won, but also to be retained thereafter, our unity must

be based on something more lasting than the memories of common suffering. And yet I am compelled to remind both Hindus and Mussalmans who complain so bitterly to-day of one another's injustice that I know of nothing more difficult for either to endure from the other than the cold-blooded decision taken by General Dyer to shoot and to shoot and to shoot strong at Jallianwallah Bagh and the calculated national humiliation of the Crawling Lane. It seems to me that we in the North suffer from a mental myopia, and as we move forward our sufferings are left behind, and gradually recede into obscurity, so that even at a very short distance of time the troubles of to-day blot out all recollection of the terrors of yesterday. And what is worse, each community remembers only that which it has itself suffered, retaining in its memory no record of the sufferings it had itself caused to others.

THE COMMUNITY OF THE BADMASHES

But in referring thus to communities we are apt to forget that it is not communities that cause suffering to other communities in the course of popular affrays, but rowdy elements of India's population which cause injury to the peace-loving. The *badmashes* belong to no community but form a distinct community of their own, and to it all is grist that comes to the mill. I was greatly impressed by an article contributed by Lala Lajpatrai from his American exile during the War when Hindu monied classes had suffered greatly in some districts of the Punjab from the depredations of Muslim *badmashes*. There was great danger of intercommunal strife, but the Lalaji hastened to point out that the Hindu sufferers had not suffered because they were Hindus but because they belonged to the monied classes. It was a case of the Haves and the Have-Nots and not a case of the Hindus and the Mussalmans. This has always to be borne in mind, particularly when there are not only the two contending parties but a third as well, which laughs just as heartily as we fight and abuse one another. Dr. Tagore has spoken a great deal since the outbreak of rowdyism in the North on the subject of inter-communal quarrels; but

the reports of his lectures made me doubt a little whether he remembered what he wrote on the same subject when similar rowdyism, but more deliberate and previously planned, had broken out over cow-killing in Behar in 1917. He happened to be travelling in a compartment shared with him by a British military officer who sneered at Indian aspirations and asked the Poet how his fellow-countrymen could talk of Swaraj when he a foreigner had to be called in every now and then to take his troops to the disturbed areas and keep the peace between Indians of different faiths. Then, at least the Poet remembered that there was a third who laughed while we suffered, and reminded the British officer of his existence. The latter asked whether there were no such quarrels before the advent of the British, and the Poet admitted their previous existence as well but he was then prompt to point out that there was one difference. They quarrelled even then, but they did not let many suns go down upon their wrath because the moment they recovered their lost tempers they also recollected that they had to live together for better or worse, and since life would be infinitely dull without more or less friendly intercourse, the sooner they made up their differences and became friends again the better. But ever since the *tertins gaudens* had come on the scene such quarrels had become more frequent and such reconciliations fewer and farther between.

THE HAND OF EASU AND THE VOICE OF JACOB

European husbands and Indian wives have a horror of that triangular family life in which the third side is represented by the mother-in-law *(Loud and continued Laughter)*. Imagine then the blessed state of that union in which the mother-in-law is not only a permanent feature of family life and never dies, (*laughter*) but in which she alone runs the household. And worse than all, the mother-in-law that makes each of us pine for single blessedness combines *two* distinct natures in *one* person, and with ever ready sympathy consoles either party, as the occasion demands, and, better still, condemns the other, in the joint role of the mother of *both* ! This would indeed be matter for laughter

if we had only sense enough not to be the dupes of this double-dealing mother-in-law. But the moment a cow is killed by a Mussalman in a provocative manner, or a noisy procession is taken out by a Hindu in front of a mosque where prayer may be going on, we are ready to rush at one another's throats forgetting that Mussalmans have never been known to be wanting when it was their own co-religionists that had to be denounced to the Government as seditionists and rebels, and that Hindus have had no better record of communal cohesion in similar circumstances. Have no Hindus reported against Mahatma Gandhi and no Mussalmans against me ? Our own sufferings have taught us that there is never a lack of one's co-religionists to do all the dirty work that may be required of them, and when a Mussalman is so ready to hurt a brother Muslim, or, for that matter, the entire Muslim community, why need we be surprised if aHindu is employed to do the same? No, friends, like *badmashes* traitors belong to no community, but form a tribe of their own. Some of you must have read Labour's denunciation of "International Finance." We have even better reason to denounce "Inter-Communal Goondaism." A Mussalman may throw beef during the night into a temple or break an idol, aud yet the Muslim community may be just as innocent of this provoking sacrilege as the Hindu community itself; and in similar circumstances the Hindu community may be wholly blameless even though a Hindu certainly threw perk into a mosque or descerated Holy Quran. Some people asked me to disown the Mussalman Minister in the Punjab. I said to them that I was prepared to disown him, if they said I had ever owned him. (*Laughter.*) What is the difference between him and the European official? They are both limbs of the same body! They belong to the Government and not to me.

But even more clear than this is the case of a Muslim Minister who may have shown favouritism towards Mussalman in the matter of patronage, and of a Hindu Minister similarly showing undue favour to Hindus. Obviously they are members of a foreign Government

whatever caste-mark they may bear. The hands are the hands of Easu, but the voice is the voice of Jacob. And yet the people of a province that has still to stop the pensions of a Dyer and an O'Dwyer are prepared to co-operate with those who insist on paying for Indian murder out of Indian funds, and to cease to co-operate with their neighbours and fellow-sufferers, only because a Minister who happens to belong to the community of the latter dispenses such petty patronage as the Reforms empower him to do in a manner that does not meet with their approval. After this one wonders what Non-Co-operation means. When the Congress publicly is welcoming Indians who resign their posts, even though it thinks it is perhaps too much just yet to call upon them to resign, there are people who call themselves Congressmen but forget all that Mahatma Gandhi had taught them of Non-Co-operation only because a Minister in their province is giving a few more petty posts to members of his own community than they think he ought to do. Friends, it is not a little embarrassing to me that this Minister happens to be a co-religionist of mine; but believe me, I would have felt even more ashamed than I now feel embarrassed if the complaint about such petty posts had come from my co-religionists. Hakim Ajmal Khan Saheb, for whose speedy and complete recovery we all pray, has related to me what unspeakable shame he felt when co-religionists of his and mine had the hardihood to show some scratches on the walls of the mosques at Multan and some broken pitchers in justification of their counter-claim that if Hindu temples had been destroyed their own mosques did not altogether escape.

THE PARABLE OF THE WISE AND THE FOOLISH MOTHER

Let me add that I would never have mentioned this had I wanted to complain about the Hindu attitude in the matter. I have done so because I feel certain that the Muslim mentality does not seem to be any better, and neither community is above these petty considerations. But even if the Mussalmans had been any better I would not have complained of the Hindus, for experience teaches us that it

serves no purpose for a member of one community to rebuke the members of another. That task must be left to its own members. How often have we not seen little children living in the same quarter of a town playing together and then quarrelling over little things ? Every boy rushes back to his own mother with a woeful tale of the wickedness of his playmates, and of course, an equally pathetic description of his own virtues. The wise mother uniformly decides against her own child and rebukes him ; and if he still persists in his complaint, he is told not to make such unsociable creatures his playmates any more. The street which is usually the common playground is thenceforward declared beyond the bounds. But solitude soon begins to purge his playmates of all their sins so that by the second or third day they are completely absolved, and he asks for, and secures, his mother's permission to play with them once more, though not before he is told that he is not to come to her again with the tale of his undeserved suffering. And this is the way that peace is secured. But, also, I have seen foolish mothers as well as wise ones, and perhaps the former constitute a majority. The moment their young hopeful comes to them for sympathy and, even worse, for effective support, they shed motherly tears of deep anguish over him, and when they have exhausted one emotion they make use of another, and, going to the mother of the wicked boy who had been so unjust to their little angel, bitterly complain of him and drop not a few hints that his upringing has evidently been neglected. This leads to still plainer hints from the other side that the complainant was a devil incarnate, and that with such parents to bring him up it was not altogether the poor creature's fault. And then the fray begins. The big guns of abuse are sent up at a gallop, and long range howitzers which leave none scot-free up to the seventh generation are brought into action. Then appears the mall auxiliarly, and if he is equally devoid of common-sense and equally jealous of his *izzat*, he opens fire instantly with something that shatters the *izzat* of the adversary for ever. Thus when the other male auxiliarly rushes up to the scene of action on hearing

the noise of this bombardment, he calls a truce to this wordy warfare, and, like the practical creature that he is, he promptly breaks the head of the other male. And it is a lucky quarter of the town if hostilities remain confined to the families directly concerned. The best commentary on all this is furnished by the action of the brace of young barbarians with whom hostilities had commenced walking off arm-in-arm to enjoy another game of *gill-danda* or *kabaddi* just as police may be marching the Big Four off to the lock-up!

It is such experiences as these which have taught us that the best method of settling intercommunal quarrels is neither to advocate the cause of your community, as in my time I have often done, nor even to pose as an arbitrator with an open and a judicious mind, but to earn the abuse of your own community. And since my brother and I have received an earnest of this already, I feel satisfied that not only am I qualifying myself for the office of a genuine patriot, but that I may begin to entertain hopes that the two communities will soon be reconciled. After this, need I say I recommend this course of "political exercises" to all my friends of every community?

SANGHATAN

Having explained my own attitude at such length I do not think I am called upon to say much about the Sanghatan. I have certainly never publicly opposed it, and if anyone thinks so he is mistaken, and must have been misled by some ill-reported speech or interview. This is entirely an affair to my Hindu brethren, and if they think they need a Sanghatan they should be allowed a perfectly free hand in the matter. Every community is entitled to undertake such social reform as it needs and if the Sanghatan is organised to remove untouchability and to provide for the speedy assimilation of the Antyaj and their complete absorption into Hindu society, I must rejoice at it both as a Mussalman and as a Congressman. Ever since the Congress at Nagpur called

upon the Hindu delegates "to make a special effort to rid Hinduism of the reproach of untouchability" and "respectfully urged the religious heads to help the growing desire to reform Hinduism in the matter of its treatment of the suppressed classes," this question has enlisted the direct interest and sympathy of the Congress. I remember very well that towards the closing months of the year 1921, Mahatma Gandhi was making the removal of untouchability the test of the Hindu's yearning for Swaraj, and if orthodox Hindu religious bodies have now seriously decided to make the required reform in Hinduism, it is bound to rejoice the hearts of that large-hearted Hindu and of all his followers.

But I cannot help recalling that this matter remained in abeyance for a considerable time, and that it was not taken up with any great zeal until after the tragic events in Malabar had caused some months later a wave of indignation and resentment to sweep over the distant Punjab, and Multan Hindus had themselves suffered from the unruly passions of the Muslim mob. It is this combination of circumstances which causes uneasiness to many of those who yearn for the unification of India and know how little weight our recently achieved unity can just yet sustain. A broken limb which has just come out of a steel frame should not be too severely strained. We may not believe every suspicion or rumour, but we must not overlook their potency for mischief if they are not quickly removed or disproved; and there is no doubt that people are busy creating the suspicion that the removal of untouchability is not intended to result in the absorption of the supposed classes into Hindu society, but merely to use them as auxiliaries on the Hindus side in future affrays. This being so, I ask if there is no ground for the uneasiness of Mahatma Gandhi's followers who have been sedulously taught, in the words of our resolution at Nagpur, "to lay special emphasis on *Non-Violence* being an integral part of the Non-Co-operation Resolution," and to invite the attention of the people to the fact that "*Non-Violence* in word and deed is as essential between the people

themselves as in respect of the Government," and finally, that "the spirit of violence is not only contrary to the growth of a true spirit of democracy, but actually retards the enforcement (if necessary) of the other stages of Non-Co-operation." If in removing the reproach of untouchability we give cause to the world to reproach us with adding to pre-existing violence, will it not sadden the heart of the Mahatma? Friends, let us befriend the suppressed classes or their own injured sakes and not for the sake of injuring others or even avenging our own injuries.

Another feature of the Sanghatan movement is the increase of interest in physical culture. This is all to the good, and if flabbiness and cowardice can be removed from any section of the Indian people there is cause only for joy. Here, too, however, there arises the question of the spirit, and I am sincerely glad that the frank discussions at Delhi last September gave an opportunity to Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya to proclaim to the world that he himself favours the creation of common *akhadas* in which young men of all communities can take their share. As for the protection of life and property and—I regret that I should have to add—the honour of our sisters, he again proclaimed his original intention that common territorial Civic Guards should be formed. It was only because he was told that the Hindu Sabha by which his motion was being discussed could not constitutionally bind other communities that he altered his resolution and agreed to the creation of Hindu Guards.

THE SANGHATAN OF THE CONGRESS CONCILIATION COMMITTEE

But in entire agreement with Hindu leaders the Hindu-Muslim Unity Committee recommended certain resolutions to the Congress, for adoption on all these subjects, and since they were immediately passed by the Congress let us now see that we give full effect to them. To prevent the possibility of disunion we have,

in the first place, to establish at the headquarters of every district, under the supervision of the District Congress Committees, and in consultation with Khilafat Committees, Hindu Sabhas and other responsible local associations, mixed Committees for the maintenance of peace and security throughout the districts. In case of any incident likely to disturb such peace and security, they would endeavour to minimise its evil consequences and provide for a speedy and satisfactory settlement, and would encourage the people, in case of any provocation, to conduct themselves with restraint, and to refer the matter to such Committees for redress of their grievances, instead of themselves resorting to retaliatory measures. I have since then realised with grief and pain that in some districts the Congress Committee have ceased to function, and that Congress workers have in some cases themselves taken a leading part in exciting inter-communal hostility. This would necessitate for some time at least the formation of supervisory bodies to check the work of the District Committees and to be substitutes for them in areas in which such Committees have not been formed. A permanent Provincial, and a similar National Conciliation Board also seem to me to be called for, and had such Boards been in existence perhaps they could have averted unfortunate collisions in some localities. These Boards could perhaps be utilised also for making enquiries into similar incidents that occur in future in spite of all our precautions, and, if necessary, to apportion the guilt between the communities concerned. Let us be ready with our machinery, and if the people know that we mean to stamp out such rowdyism and to maintain peace, security and inter-communal friendship, there is little likelihood of our having to sit in judgment upon contending communities.

CIVIC GUARDS

In the next place, the Congress resolved at Delhi that its local Committees be instructed to form and maintain, under their own supervision and control, local Corps of

Civic Guards (open to all communities), throughout the country, for the maintenance of peace and order, and for the performance of other civic duties. Local Committees of the Congress were also to be instructed to induce and encourage the people to take up physical culture, and to provide necessary facilities for this purpose so that our people may be enabled to undertake their self-defence. I have heard of communal *dals* and *akhadas*, but I fear the local Committees have not yet had sufficient time to organise Congress Corps of Civic Guards and open Congress *akhadas*, I, however, know of one School of Physical Culture at Ajmer which sent some of its members of the Delhi Congress, and while pleased with their physical development, I rejoiced still more when I learnt that, in spite of much persuasion to throw in their lot with their community during the unfortunate affray there and indulge in partisan violence, these young men remained wholly non-violent and refused to take sides. Can anyone say after this that the Congress exercises no influence in favour of national unity and non-violence? Whenever we have men like our Arjunlal Sethiji, Maulana Moinuddin and Mirza Abdul Qadir Beg, we may confidently look forward to the maintenance, or, at least, the earliest possible restoration of peace. Dr. Hardikar has, I am happy to say, interested himself in the creation of Volunteer Corps, and let me confess, friends, that even to-day when I am presiding over the Congress I feel I would be more in my element if I were working in Dr. Hardikar's place. If only the Government knew how necesaary is the formation of volunteer corps of Civic Guards to keep our crowds even more peaceful than they already are and far more orderly and self-restrained, it would not dream of using its Criminal Law Amendment Act against them and their organisers, provided, of course, it too desired peace and order to prevail in the land. In this matter I have a personal end to serve also. Travelling as constantly as I do, and attending mass meetings by the dozen, and being unfortunately only too often carried in procession, I feel the need of such Corps more than the stay-at-home among as, and I am often

tempted to take in hand the local volunteers attending on such-occasions, forgetting for the moment that no man can attend at his own funeral.

SENSE OF HONOUR OF OUR BADMASHES

But let me say one word on the subject of the protection of the honour of our women before I take leave of the Sanghatan question, and let me preface my last word on the subject with the admission that it is not really mine but my wife's. At Almora where she was addressing a ladies' meeting composed mainly of her Hindu sisters, she said that if in a place such as Almora, where Mussalmans form a very insignificant minority, she found that an anti-Muslim riot had broken out, and her male relations were not available to help her to protect her own or her daughter's honour, she would unhesitatingly appeal to the first Hindu as to a brother even if she knew him to be a *badmash*, (hear, hear) and ask him to take her and her children under his personal protection. She said she had enough confidence in the sense of honour even of India's *badmashes* and in their "sportsmanship" so to speak, and I doubt if there are many *badmashes* in India on whom such a personal appeal of a sister in distress will fail to have any effect. Friends, trust disarms even wickedness and succeeds where six-chambered revolvers fail, and Shakespeare knew human nature better than some of us seem to do when he wrote:

> There is a soul of goodness in things evil.

I cannot do better than to appeal to my sisters to teach us to trust each other more than we do at present, and by their own courageous confidence develop in the worst of us that God-given "soul of goodness."

SHUDDHI

Another movement that has affected Hindu-Muslim relations is Shuddhi. I myself believe in a missionary religion, and by a missionary religion should be taken to mean one in which, in the words of Professor Max Muller, the spreading of the truth and the conversion of

unbelievers are raised to the rank of a sacred duty. It is the spirit of truth in the hearts of believers which cannot rest unless it manifests itself in thought, word and deed, which is not satisfied till it has carried its message to every human soul, till what it believes to be the truth is accepted as the truth by all the members of the human family. Christianity and Buddhism as well as Islam are known to be missionary religions, but Judaism, Zoroastrianism snd and Hinduism are generally regarded as non-missionary.

Now, this has been my complaint for a long time against Hinduism, and on one occasion, lecturing at Allahabad in 1907, I had pointed out the contrast between Mussalmans and Hindus, by saying that the worst that could be said of a Muslim was that he had a tasteless mess which he called a dish fit for kings, and wanted all to share it with him, thrusting it down the throats of such as did not relish it and would rather not have it, while his Hindu brother who prided himself on his cookery, retired into the privacy of his kitchen and greedily devoured all that he had cooked, without permitting even the shadow of his brother to fall on his food,or sparing even a crumb for him. This was said not altogether in levity ; and in fact, I once asked Mahatma Gandhi to justify this feature of his faith to me. It will be strange, then, if to-day, when there are evidences of a missionary zeal in the activities of my Hindu brethren, I should resent their efforts in spreading their faith. More than that, if the Malkana Rajputs are in reality so unfamiliar with Islam as to be taken for Hindus, Mussalmans must thank Hindu missionaries for so forcibly reminding them of their own duty to look to the condition of millions of Mussalmans whose knowledge of Islam is as defective as their practice of its rites is slack.

Both communities must be free to preach as well as practise the tenets of their respective faiths. There are competing types of culture in the world, each instinct with the spirit of propagandism, and I hope we live in an age of conscious selection as between ideal systems. We cannot surely wish to practise that wasteful, and, at best, a precarious, elimination of "false doctrine" by actual

destruction of those who hold it. I hope the age of the Spanish Inquisition has gone for ever, and no one would think of abolishing heresy by wiping out the heretic. Progress is now possible along the more direct and less painful path of conversion. But it must be the result of the exercise of the power of rational choice, and the man whose conversion we seek must be free to choose his faith. What true Muslim could be satisfied by the kind of "conversion" which some fanatical Moplahs are believed to have effected during the period of the Malabar troubles by forcibly depriving some Nairs of their tufts of hair indicating their Hindu faith? No better in the sight of God is that outward conformity which is forced upon a person by bringing undue worldly pressure to bear upon him.

Allegations of such pressure by zemindars and money-lenders and by a numerical majority of neighbours in the surrounding area have been made and denied, and counter-allegations have been made. This cannot but react unfavourably on national unity; and when over a very small matter the decision to put a stop to all demonstrative and inflammatory methods of mass conversion and reclamation was given up, the Hindu-Muslim Unity Committee at Delhi recommended to the Congress a resolution which was duly adopted, that a Committee be formed to enquire into incidents connected with "Shuddhi" and "Anti-Shuddhi" movements, to visit places wherever coercion, intimidation, exercise of undue pressure or influence, or use of methods of proselytisation inconsistent with such a religious object is alleged or suspected, and to recommend such means as it thinks necessary for the prevention of such practices. Every political party in the West is, or at least, pretends to be jealous of its honour and willingly consents to have a Corrupt Practices Act passed by the Legislature. We who pride ourselves on our greater spirituality must be truly jealous of our reputations, and a national body like the Congress is a proper authority to advise all communities in this matter, if not to enforce a Corrupt Practices Act as part of the unwritten law of the nation. My own belief is that both

sides are working with an eye much more on the next decennial Census than on heaven itself, and I frankly confess it is on such occasions that I sigh for the days when our forefathers settled things by cutting heads rather than counting them.

ABSORPTION OR CONVERSION

The quarrels about *alams* and *pipal* trees and musical processions are truly childish; but there is one question which can easily furnish a ground for complaint of unfriendly action if communal activities are not amicably adjusted. This is the question of the conversion of the Suppressed Classes if Hindu society does not speedily absorb them. The Christian missionary is already busy and no one quarrels with him. But the moment some Muslim Missionary Society is organised for the same purpose there is every likelihood of an outcry in the Hindu Press. It has been suggested to me by an influential and wealthy gentleman who is able to organise a Missionary Society on a large scale for the Conversion of the Suppressed Classes, that it should be possible to reach a settlement with leading Hindu gentlemen and divide the country into separate areas where Hindu and Muslim Missionaries could respectively work, each Community preparing for each year, or longer unit of time if necessary an estimate of the numbers it is prepared to absorb or convert. These estimates would of course be based on the number of workers and funds each had to spare, and tested by the actual figures of the previous period. In this way each community would be free to do the work of absorption and conversion or rather, of reform without chances of collision with one another. I cannot say in what light my Hindu brethren will take it, and I place this suggestion tentatively in all frankness and sincerity before them. All that I say for myself, is that I have seen the condition of the *kali paraj* in the Baroda State and of the Gonds in the Central Provinces and I frankly confess it is a reproach to us all. If the Hindus will not absorb them into their own society, others will and must, and then the orthodox Hindu too will cease to treat

them as untouchables. Conversion seems to transmute them by a strong alchemy. But does this not place a premium upon conversion?

THE DUTY OF THE PRESS

Once more the best and surest remedy is a change in the spirit of proselytisation; but that cannot be expected with a press so unrestrainedly partisan as we have to-day in parts of India. I am myself a journalist, and you all know that I have undergone some little suffering for the sake of securing the freedom of the Indian Press. At least, I can claim the honour, if honour it be, to have figured in the leading case under the late lamentable Press Act, and it was I who started this fox even if I could not be at the kill. The removal of these external fetters makes it all the more necessary that we should exercise greater restraint than before over ourselves. But what I have seen of the Vernacular Press in the Punjab makes me apprehend that if it is not checked by the combined efforts of all Congressmen it will make us sigh for the resurrection of that dead and damned piece of bureaucratic legislation. Not that the bureaucracy would find much in our Punjab papers to which it would be inclined to apply the provisions of the Press Act even if it were resurrected, for in the estimation of the bureaucrat the offence punishable under Section 153-A of the Indian Penal Code is not to be named in the same breath with that punishable under Section 124-A of that Code. And even though the Press Act is no more, the Penal Code and the Civil Courts, where damages can be claimed by officials financed by the Government for alleged defamation, serve the Government well enough, but the nation remains wholly unprotected, and it is up to us not to leave it so exposed. It was I who strongly urged the Hindu-Muslim Unity Committee last September to recommend to the Congress a resolution on the subject of the Press. The Congress was asked to instruct its Working Committee to issue a manifesto inviting the attention of the Indian newspapers to the extreme necessity of exercising great restraint when dealing with matters likely to affect inter-communal relations, and also in

reporting events and incidents relating to inter-communal dissensions and in commenting upon them. It was asked to appeal to them not to adopt an attitude which might prove detrimental to the best interests of India and which might embitter the relations between different communities. It was also recommended to the Congress that its Working Committee might be instructed to appoint in each province a small Committee which should request such newspapers as publish any matter likely to create inter-communal dissensions that they should desist from following such a course of action, and that if, in spite of this friendly advice, no useful result were achieved, these Committees should proclaim such newspaper. If even after this they did not alter their attitude, a boycott of them by Congressmen was to be declared in the last resort. The Congress adopted this resolution also, but I fear its executive has not yet had time to carry out the instructions issued by the Congress. The most important work that we have to do, apart from this of restoring Hindu-Muslim unity, is to organise an adequate permanent establishment for the Congress and its Provincial and Local Committees ; for it is no use passing Resolutions in the Congress which cannot be attended to by the honorary executive for lack of a paid, permanent establishment.

Friends, you may perhaps say I have taken up too much of your time in describing and detailing what the Congress did at Delhi and have hardly any proposals to place before you to-day. My answer is that you need few fresh proposals if you are determined to carry out those which you have already accepted. At Delhi we were able to proclaim to the world that we were not satisfied with the existing state of affairs and that we were resolved to remain united. That itself cleared the air to a great extent; but this was not all. We had provided remedies essentially sound in principle for our national ills; only we have not so far had time to use them. We spent perhaps too much time in examining, analysing and criticising the resolutions we had passed at Delhi, and a large section of Congressmen

has been kept busy by the elections. Unless you adopt other measures to restore the national unity, it will be the duty of your executive to carry out the measures already adopted. But your executive will fail to accomplish anything of lasting value unless it has your ungrudging support and active assistance. In fact, you are your own most effective executive, and as your servant specially nominated by you for the year that is now commencing I appeal to you to assist me in carrying out your own orders.

To the Indian Press I would address my most earnest appeal urging the Press to rise to the height of the occasion and not to disappoint the high expectations of one who is himself a journalist. When I was recently at Bijapur again and for the first time visited its famous dome, a friend of mine who was as deeply impressed as myself by that wonderful pile, asked me in a whisper right across the dome if Europe with all its boast of superiority had a whispering gallery such as that of the *Gol Gunbad*. It is no doubt a most astonishing experience to be able to hear distinctly across such a great space everything that is whispered, and the nine echoes heard in that gallery are equally remarkable. My friend was for the moment living the brilliant past of Bijapur over again and felt inordinate pride in the achievements of his Muslim ancestors. It was no doubt a great shock to him when I whispered back that the Whispering Gallery of Europe was even more marvellous. And then I told him that Europe's Whispering Gallery was the Press, its Fourth Estate! Every lie softly whispered in the privacy of the Editor-Proprietor's sanctum was shouted across all the continents, increasing in pitch and volume with every reverberation till it ended in the united shriek of hundreds of millions, of fanatics and lunatics (*laughter*), leaving no chance for poor tongue-tied Truth to be heard. And yet it is just as easy to make the world resound with the thunder-peals of Truth as with the shrieks of Falsehood, and it is for the Indian Press to choose whether it will serve as the Whispering Gallery of Truth or of Falsehood.

SWARAJ AND FOREIGN AGGRESSION

Before I take final leave of the Hindu-Muslim question I wish to declare that if India wins Swaraj it will satisfy all the religious requirements of a Muslim in India. Swaraj, Sarv-Raj or the Raj of all, implies Swadharma, and must imply that in an Eastern country. It is not therefore necessary that a Mussalman should sit on the throne of the Mughals at Delhi, and we have all seen how the greatest Muslim State has ceased to have a Royal Throne and has converted itself into a Republic. Every true Muslim looks back with pride upon the Thirty Years of the Truly Guided Khalifas during which the Successors of the Prophet and the Commanders of the Faithful (with whom Allah was pleased) were the Chief Servants of the Commonwealth. Islam spread over the major portion of the civilised world and its empire extended over all the continents of the known world; but no Muslim holds dear the memory of Islam's later conquests and expansion as that of the first thirty years when it was the pride of the Muslim envoy to tell the envoys of the Byzantine and Iranian empires who had been boasting of the despotic power of their respective rulers that the Muslims had themselves appointed their ruler and would depose him just as readily if he acted against the Law of God. Victory has not been snatched from the jaws of defeat and despair by the valiant and God-fearing Turks to no purpose, and I feel confident that once they are free from the distractions inevitable after the victories both of war and peace they will revive with God's assistance the glories not of the Omayyide or Abbaside Empire, but of the first Thirty Years of the Khilafat before there were any kings or dynasts.

I have my own views of the possible adjustment of the relations of all Muslim States and the Khalifa, but this is not the occasion to state them. It would suffice if I state here that Mussalmans can satisfy all their religious requirements no matter who is their secular sovereign so long as they recognise that "there is no governance but God's," and that "Him alone are we commanded to serve." As in every religion, there are in Islam certain things which

every Mussalman is required to do, and certain things which he is required not to do. Between these duties and prohibitions lies a vast stretch of ground in which he is free to roam about except for certain things which are in the nature of preferences. Now a Mussalman can obey no creature of God who commands him to neglect one of these duties or to disregard one of these prohibitions, and it makes no difference whether that person is one of his own parents or his master or ruler, whether he is an enemy or a friend, or whether he is a Muslim or a non-Muslim. So long as the temporal power of Islam is adequate and is always at the diposal of the Khalifa, it matters little whether a Muslim is a subject of Muslim or a non-Muslim. All he needs is the fullest freedom to obey none but God in the matter of his religious duties and prohibitions. Even if a Muslim sovereign, nay, even if the Khalifa himself, commanded him to disobey God, he must refuse; and it is obvious that he could not render unto a non-Muslim Cæsar what he could not render unto a Muslim Cæsar because it was due only to God. This being so, I cannot understand why there need be any question of a Muslim's unflinching loyalty to a Swaraj and Swadharma government.

As for the bogey of His Majesty the Ameer of Afghanistan attacking India with the assistance of Indian Muslims, it is the creation of fear and cowardice, and can only be laid at rest by courage and self-confidence. I must say it did my heart good to hear my esteemed friend Pandit Jawaharlal say: "Let us win Swaraj and we shall see who comes." We shall certainly be ready to meet all comers, and it will be easy matter to snatch away Freedom from the hands that have succeeded in winning it back after a century-and-a-half of slavery. As for myself, if India ever needs a humble soldier to resist an aggressor, be he the Muslim or non-Muslim, your comrade whom you have to-day called out of the ranks will gladly fill his place in the ranks. He certainly will be no deserter.

AFGHANISTAN

I have heard that my Madras speech of 1921 which had been considered in official circles to be highly treasonable, although it embodied nothing more or less than the sentiments my brother and I had expressed in a letter we had addressed from the Betul gaol to the Viceroy, had not found much favour even in Afghanistan. And I do not wonder that our Afghan neighbours feel a little hurt when they are so often described as if they were harbouring designs on India. If only we knew how difficult His Majesty the Ameer must be finding the task of organising his kingdom and developing its resources without the assistance of foreign personnel, we would not talk of the possibility of Afghan aggression. Afghanistan is enough to keep him and his government fully occupied without the additional worry of the problem of how a Kabul pony can swallow an Indian elephant. If the Afghans are hurt merely because I explained my own position in the event of a hypothetical aggression from Afghanistan, what must be my own feelings in having to explain that position? Because I am a Muslim, I have not ceased to be an Indian, and it is surely humiliating to any Indian's national pride to think that his fellow-countrymen regard his country and theirs as an easy prey for any foreign assailant no matter how weak.

"AND THE FOURTH WOULD KNOCK ME DOWN"

Friends, you will forgive me if I relate a story here which seems so applicable to our own situation. I have to preface it with a special apology to my Banya friends because, whosoever may have been the author of the story, he had certainly lived in an age much anterior to ours when the most courageous leader that India has known in recent times happens to be no other than a Banya, and one of his chief lieutenants and lovers is "my brave Banya" as I call my dear friend Seth Jamnalal Bajaj. The story is that four travellers happened to meet each other on the road and agreed to travel together for safety's sake. It happened that after dusk they were met by some

highwaymen who demanded the surrender of all their belongings. Then they discovered that their assailants were also only four. One of the travellers who was a Rajput whispered to his companion who was a Pathan that he could successfully tackle the biggest of the highwaymen. Thereupon the Pathan assured the Rajput that, for his part, he too could manage to deal with the next biggest. Thus encouraged the third of the travellers who was a middle-aged Brahmin said : " And I could knock down the third." Then came the turn of the fourth who was a Banya, and equally promptly came his declaration : " And the fourth would knock *me* down !" This led the Brahmin to apprehend that in that case he might be required to tackle not one but two, and he decided to give in. The Pathan too gave it in for fear he might have to deal with three assailants, and, finally the Rajput also surrendered because obviously he was no match for all the four. And all this because one traveller out of the four had felt just as convinced that the fourth highwayman would knock him down as his three companions were convinced that they could knock down one highwayman apiece!

NEED OF COURAGE AND CONFIDENCE

May I not ask you, friends, if it is not now time when we have a Banya for our brave leader for all of us to give up such conviction of defeat before the battle is joined? Why, only recently a Delhi paper published the remarkable discovery of its Secret Investigator that a Delegation consisting of two aged Arabs and one young one who have come from Palestine with the permission of the Government to raise funds from Indian Mussalmans for the repair of the Masjid-ul-Aqsa and the Qubbat-us-Sakhra at Jerusalem is the vanguard of an invading force of Arabs! Not with such fears and suspicions and tremors can Freedom be won. This, friends, is the way to lose even the little we have. It reminds me of the curse of the Lord on Israel which is recorded in Deuteronomy :

The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed and thou perish quickly.

Thy Lord shall curse thee to be smitten before thine enemies. thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them: and shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.

And thy carcase shall be meat unto all the fowls of the air, and unto beasts of the earth and no man shall fray them away.

The Lord shall smite them with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart:

And thou shalt grope at noonday as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways: and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save thee.

Thou shalt build an house, and thou shalt not dwell therein: though shalt plant a vineyard and thou shalt not gather the grapes thereof.

Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people, and thine eyes shall look and fail with longing for them all the day long; and there shall be no might in thine hand.

The fruit of thine land and all thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed always;

So that thout shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.

And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee.

The stranger, that is within thee shalt get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low.

He shall lend to thee and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head and thou shalt be the tail.

Moreover all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed;

And they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder and upon thy seat for ever.

THE TURKS' MESSAGE

The duty of the Mussalmans to-day is a double one. They owe a duty to themselves as Indians to secure freedom for themselves and for their posterity. India is no less their country than the Hindu's and even if the Hindus were to shrink from the sacrifices required in Freedom's battle, though they will certainly never do so, it would still be their duty to persevere and to say that they would

win Swaraj for all India even if they received no aid from the rest of India. But as Mussalmans too they are to secure Swaraj for their country. When I met the Turks in Paris, in Switzerland and in Rome, they wondered how the same country that had despatched a large army, which included so considerable a proportion of Mussalmans, to fight against them could also send a delegation like ours to plead for better terms for them after their defeat. When I solved this riddle for them by explaining the paradox that many of the Muslim warriors that were not afraid of the Turkish sword or the German gun and could pass months and years in those death-traps called trenches, were yet afraid of the policeman's truncheon and of police lock-ups and prison cells, my Turkish friends told me that in that case I must take the first boat back to India, and, instead of endeavouring to prevent their enslavement, I should go and break the fetters of my own countrymen. "We have beaten, the English," they said, "on the soil of Turkey and in the Straits; but we could not keep at bay for ever your Indian hordes that pressed us hard in Palestine and in Mesopotamia. Once you are free and no Indian Muslim can any longer be driven to fight against the forces of the Khalifa, both Turkey and Islam will be safe. It is your duty to us as well to yourselves that you first win freedom in your own country." But they added: "Let not your Hindu and Sikh fellow-countrymen think that they owe a duty only to themselves and none to us. It is in order to keep them enslaved that Britain has forged such heavy chains for us."

AN EASTERN FEDERATION

Friends, I am glad to hear that so many of my Hindu fellow-workers are thinking of establishing a relationship with other Eastern countries. Their political ideas have scaled the ramparts of the Himalayas and the most of the surrounding seas. They recognise that the freedom of every Asiatic nation helps their own freedom, and they contemplate the organisation of an Eastern Federation. The first step had already been taken by Mahatma Gandhi when at Amritsar, he identified

himself with the cause of the Khilafat. It would be a strange thing if while the Hindus set about organising an Eastern Federation, Indian Mussalmans should cease to co-operate with them all because one newspaper correspondent realised in the sufferings of the Mussalmans at Saharanpur the tragic scenes enacted at Smyrna. Nothing could be more foolish and more obscure than this, and if the Turks ever came to hear of this comparison they would not feel an excess of gratitude for us.

A FINAL QUESTION TO THE MUSSALMANS

But one question and one only I shall ask those who point to the episode of Saharanpur—where no doubt it is the Hindus that have suffered most—as a sufficient reason to veer round from Non-Co-operation to Co-operation. And that question is this: Was there no British Government ruling in India when Mussalmans had to undergo such unmerited sufferings? Was a Hindu administering the district or even a Non-Co-operating Muslim? Finally, was not the department of justice administered by a Mussalman who had broken away from the community of which he used to be a great leader at one time and had co-operated with the foreign Government? These are not three separate questions, but one, *viz.*, if neither the Government nor those Mussalmans who co-operate with it were able to save the Mussalmans of Saharanpur, what prospect is there of any greater safety for them if these conditions are perpetuated by our co-operation? I pause for an answer, but I fear I shall not get it.

In the meantime, the Holy Land of Islam remains in the custody of non-Muslim mandatories. Five times a day every Mussalman who offers his daily prayers with regularity turns his face towards the Ka'ba. While I was still in the Bijapur gaol, a question occurred to me which I put into verse, and it still remains unanswered:

> His Ka'ba facing which we were daily offering prayers, what shall we say to Him how it was left under the enemy's control?

THE BLOW RECALLED AFTER THE FIGHT

Friends, I have said all that I could say on the Hindu-Muslim question and if after all this lengthy dissertation, I leave any Hindu or Mussalman still unconvinced of the necessity of Co-operation among ourselves and Non-Co-operation with our foreign masters, I can say no more and must acknowledge myself beaten. One thing is certain, and it is this, that neither can the Hindus exterminate the Mussalmans to-day nor can the Mussalmans get rid of the Hindus. If the Hindus entertain any such designs they must know that they lost their opportunity when Mohamed bin Qasim landed on the soil of Sindh twelve hundred years ago. Then the Mussalmans were few, and to-day they number more than seventy millions. And if the Mussalmans entertain similar notions, they too have lost their opportunity. They should have wiped out the whole breed of Hindus when they ruled from Kashmir to Cape Comorin and from Karachi to Chittagong. And as the Persian proverb says: the blow that is recalled after the fight must be struck on one's own jaw. If they cannot get rid of one another, the only thing to do is to settle down to co-operate with one another, and while the Mussalmans must remove all doubts from the Hindu mind about their desire for Swaraj for its own sake and their readiness to resist all foreign aggression, the Hindus must similarly remove from the Muslim mind all apprehensions that the Hindu majority is synonymous with Muslim servitude. As for myself, I am willing to exchange my present servitude for another in which my Hindu fellow-countryman would be the slave-driver instead of the foreign master of my destiny; for by this exchange I would at least prevent the enslavement of 250 million of my co-religionists whose slavery is only another name for the continued existence of European Imperialism. When at Lucknow in 1916 some Hindus complained to my late chief, Bal Gangadhar Tilak Maharaj, that they were giving too much to the Mussalmans, he answered back like a true and far-seeing statesman: "You can never give the Mussalmans too much." To-day when I hear

complaints that that we are showing great weakness in harping on Hindu-Muslim unity when the Hindus show no desire to unite, I say: "You can never show too great weakness in your dealings with Hindus." Remember, it is only the weak who fear to appear too weak to others. With this observation I take my last leave of this question without a proper and a lasting settlement of which we can effect nothing.

COUNCIL-ENTRY

This was the main question to be dealt with at Delhi even though the Special Session was held in order to arrive at a settlement of the Council-entry question. I have devoted so large a portion of my address to it not only because of its importance, but also because happily the other is no longer a live issue. At Delhi at my solicitation the Congress removed the ban and permitted those who had no religious or other conscientious objections against entering the Legislatures or voting at the then forthcoming elections to do so, and suspended the propaganda in favour of the boycott of Councils which had achieved such signal success three years previously. The elections have been held, and it can, in my humble judgment, serve no useful purpose to re-open a question which kept us occupied in much sterile activity for more than a year and sorely tried our tempers. I hold strong views on the subject of the triple boycott of Councils, law-courts and schools and colleges, and did not shrink from giving expression to them in strong, or, as my Swarajist friends complained, perhaps in too strong language in the course of the discussion in the Subjects Committee at Delhi. I hold the same views to-day and would gladly give expression to them again in equally strong language if I could be convinced that it was necessary in the interests of the Congress and the country. But of this I am as little convinced as of the soundness of the Swaraj Party views, and, on the contrary, I am fully convinced that no word should escape me which would estrange from the Indian National Congress a single Indian who has any

national feeling. (*Hear, hear.*) In fact, I desire to take a leaf out of the book of the late Lord Morley, whose recent death has removed from the world one who had shown both courage and resource in asking his fellow-countrymen also to do such justice to India as he himself was capable of doing. "Let us rally the Moderates."

THE MODERATES AND THE IMPERIAL CONFERENCE

I take no party view of the recent elections, and the franchise is far too restricted to read in them the judgment of the nation. But if one thing is more certain than another it is this, that India refuses to co-operate any longer with its foreign rulers or with those who co-operate with them. Many things have helped to disillusion those honest Nationalists who still held the opinions which many of us held as recently as four years ago including Mahatma Gandhi. The discussions in the Imperial Council with regard to the status of Indians overseas have been so extensively advertised that it must be a very foolish fish that would still be deceived by the poor bait offered. South Africa where the Indian population still numbers 160,000 is adamant. The Imperial Government which cannot plead its impotence to interfere in the so-called "internal affairs" of the free Dominions when Kenya and other Crown Colonies are concerned, cannot hold out any hopes of reversing its palpably iniquitous decision, and has only consented to hear India's case once more. But the other Dominions are "sympathetic" since sympathy costs so little, and even here they are not quite optimistic where the Indians in British Columbia, of the "Komagata Maru" fame, still numbering some 11,00 are concerned, though the rest of Canada, which has only a bare hundred, is disposed to be generous. I am prepared to give the fullest credit to the impassioned advocacy and highly emotional appeals of Dr. Sapru and his victory has been complete. But, alas! he had aimed so low from the very outset that his victory leaves such of us as could not like him feel the heat of the encounter uncomfortably cold.

It reminds me of a friend who had left a lucrative enough post, and, making a new departure for an up-country

Muslim graduate, had started business as a commission agent in Bombay. One day he met me with every show of exultation, and announced that he had closed the day with cent per cent. profit in the transaction that had kept him so fully engaged. But when I asked for more details I learnt that my friend had sold a few dozen Japanese paper serviettes, and that the cent per cent profit would hardly pay the day's rent of his office! After long and weary years of strife the Imperial Council passed in 1921 a Resolution recognising the desirability of conceding equal status to Indians overseas, but *Hamlet* was acted with the part of the Prince of Denmark carefully cut out by General Smuts, the Imperial Dramatic Censor. And yet India was asked to rejoice over her cent-per-cent profits. However, as it happened the profits remained unrealised, and two whole years later the battle had to be fought again over the Imperial counter. There were doubts about the nature of the bargain. Such as whether payment was only desirable or necessary, and here the slim Boer General wanted to rescind the entire transaction. But luck has favoured the travelling agents of India again, even though there was much disagreement among them and one of the two has made a discovery not less remarkable than that of Columbus inasmuch as he has discovered in the Boer General a skilfully disguised friend of India. We have secured cent-per-cent profits again, and a roving commission will go out to each of the partners in the other party's firm and by direct dealing ascertain what prospect there is of any payment. This, then, is the net gain. Dr. Sapru's travelling agents, no doubt some of the Great Unemployed, will have the great privilege of having direct dealings with the partners of John Bull, Sons, & Co. Lest I may be suspected of belittling the results achieved, I quote the conclusion laboriously reached by the *Times* at the fag end of its leading article on "India and the Commonwealth." "The spirit of sympathy," concludes the *Times*, "and of good will expressed by the representatives of the British Government and of the Dominions Overseas, the sincere appreciation of the share of India in the Commonwealth—these are hardly less

important to her than the practical recognition of her right to negotiate for herself with the other partners." Yes, Dr. Sapru and his royal companion have indeed secured "the practical recognition of India's right to negotiate for herself with the other partners"; but when will the bargain be concluded and payment received, and—what will be its amount?

Imperial Conferences will no doubt continue to succeed each other with great regularity, and the success of the Indian dependency at each will be advertised more and more extensively. In 1921, you know, they won something, which they said, was first-class citizenship. What are they going to win in 1923? They said: Implementation. (*Laughter.*) When I was in jail, I was unable to know what this implementing was. This implementation is to try to bring into some sort of realisation the promise of 1921. But there is no chance of that yet. Perhaps we shall have to attend many more conferences for that. But it is too much for poor human nature to wait patiently and continue to hope while the Imperial stratification proceeds from the Archean or Pre-Cambrian stratum through all the Paleozoic, Mesozoic, Cainozoic strata or divisions in their true order of antiquity, and the long list of sub-divisions, such as the Eocene, Oligocene, Miocene, and Pliocene, before we come to the Pleistocene or Glacial and finally to the Post-Glacial or Human period. No honest Moderate would be so moderate as to be satisfied with this crawling pace of our Imperial progress and no honest Liberal could be so liberal as to give unlimited time to England to do us bare justice, especially when they recognise, as they must more and more clearly as each day passes, that a wrong system of education is fast paralysing us and robbing us of our youth and manhood.

Friends, if our fathers, and still more, if our grandfathers had realised, as we realise to-day, the condition of our slavery, we should have been free even within a month. (*Hear, hear.*) They had the power to be free, but they did not know they were slaves. We, those

few of us who are non-co-operators, recognise this that we are slaves. But we have not yet the power and the self-discipline that can achieve freedom.

When their disillusionment is just as complete as ours, the question will still have to be answered: "How far are they prepared to go?" Non-co-operation has from the very outset required only the minimum sacrifice from the maximum number, though even the minimum in the Post-Gandhi era far exceeds the maximum in most cases of the Pre-Gandhi period. But Liberty can neither be won nor retained on the principle of Limited Liability. Dr. Sapru's advocacy may have been all that it could be, but what is there to follow it? Only "resolutions", petitions and protests, and at best a silly *hartal* to wind up with? If that is all, let us leave off this crazy pursuit of politics. Those whose ancestors have won freedom on the field of Runnymede or after the "crowning mercy" of Worcester or by razing the Bastile to the ground may play with politics. We have yet to win our Magna Carta and our Bill of Rights, and it is premature for us to treat politics as a Western pastime. For long we thought in terms of the Penal Code, and now we think we have advanced very far on the road of Reform if we think in terms of Dicey and of Erskine May. We forget that we have still to think in terms of History! I am prepared to admit that the Liberal gun is long enough. The length of the barrel, however, counts for little. It is the charge behind that matters. Once every Liberal or Moderate makes up his mind that patriotism must be to him as it was to every patriot in the world's history who won freedom for his country from a foreign yoke—a matter of unlimited liability, then—all is well. The Congress is his proper place even though he may at first proceed at a slow pace from force of habit. And it is just because I know that the leaders of the Swaraj Party are prepared to go to any length that I refused to be a party to driving them out of the Congress. (*Hear hear.*) I will challenge any man to tell me that Desabandhu Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru are not willing to make as many sacrifices as any of the

best No-changers including myself. I hold that their principles and methods are wrong. I know that they will not co-operate with the Government, but will co-operate with us. Because, they still stick to his path and love the Mahatma as much as we do, even though we pride ourselves upon the fact that we are the only ones who love him.

BARDOLI AND THE SWARAJ PARTY

It is true many of the Swarajists have retained to this day something (not all, please don't take offence), of their laboriously acquired Western mentality and revel in parliamentary discussions and debates. Many more who have willingly relinquished all thought of the use of force even for purposes of self-defence want the spice of this wordy warfare to make the insipid fare prepared at Bardoli piquant enough for their jaded palates. Let me tell you an interesting anecdote, what a merchant told me in Calcutta. When the Mahatma and I, just before my incarceration, went to the Colootola street a merchant friend of mine came to us and told the Mahatma that he had ruined him. "Are you dealing in piece-goods ?" asked the Mahatma. He replied : "No, I was dealing in British scents, scented soaps, pickles and jams." These are things that we Indians are consuming in larger quantities than even the Europeans themselves. (*Laughter.*) The Mahatma remarked to him : "I never asked anybody to boycott these things, though I would be very pleased if they did." The merchant said : "All right. But do you think, Sir, that any man is going to spend Rs. 7 or Rs. 8 over a small scented bottle to put it over the dirty *khaddar* which you want all people to wear?" (*Laughter.*) Another said to the Mahatma that he put on khaddar one day and began to eat *pullav*. But he soon felt ashamed of himself and never liked to taste the dainty afterwards. That is the revolution that the Charkha and Khaddar have effected on human mentality. (*Hear, hear.*) Many more still have not fully understood the almost unlimited possibilities of the *charkha* which must revolutionise Indian life while it frees us from economic slavery. Above all, the Swaraj

party is the embodiment of the depression experienced by all India when Mahatma Gandhi, after having brought the country to the very door of Swaraj, suddenly had to declare that it was unwise to force that door by resorting to mass Civil Disobedience, and that his plan of action must be changed from an offensive bold to the verge of audacity to a defensive which to those who did not know our generalissimo looked almost like a surrender. But, as I told the Mahatma when I was passing through Bardoli on my way from the Karachi gaol to the Bijapur gaol, his change of plan was out of his strength and not out of his weakness and had he been left free for some weeks longer he would have changed the face of the whole situation. He would have put new life into the Bardoli programme in spite of taking away all the aggressive features of the non-co-operation movement. He was, however, arrested and imprisoned before the people had recovered from the first depressing shock of Bardoli, and although there were hundreds and thousands, nay, hundreds of thousands and millions, who loved him and felt the pang of separation, apparently there was none who could put a new life into the Bardoli programme and make full use of the weapon of offence which the Government had placed in Indian hands by treating the Mahatma as a felon. Friends, you may not have passed the Mahatma as a felon! I have not sufficient data at my disposal to enable me to say whether the Mahatma was justified in listening to the despairing counsel of those who hastened to inform him that mass Civil Disobedience free from grave danger of violence was impossible after the Chauri-Chaura affair. But I do think Civil Disobedience free from such danger was possible immediately on the imprisonment of Mahatma Gandhi, and I would have deliberately disobeyed my chief and fought the Government with the weapon it had placed in my hand. No physician, as my brother says, is permitted to prescribe anything for himself when he is ailing, and after Mahatma Gandhi was "buried alive", it was enough if we paid due regard to his creed of Non-Violence, wtthout having to carry out his testamentary injunction with regard to the suspension of Civil Disobedience also.

Had such a course been followed I doubt if the Swaraj party would have come into being.

FUTURE RELATIONS OF THE CONGRESS AND THE SWARAJ PARTY

Be that as it may, the existence of the Swaraj party cannot be ignored whatever view we may have formed about its genesis. I will not be free to speak to you. You may decide when the question arises. Its early beginnings were small enough, but the peregrinations of the Civil Disobedience Committee, which occupied the time, attention and energies of some of our best workers, also succeeded in diverting the attention of all from the work of construction, and drove many of the most zealous among our younger men into the group which sought to enter the Councils. It is an idle speculation now, except to the extent that it helps us to formulate a plan for future work, to estimate how the chances of this group would have been affected if the programme of constructive work had been pushed forward and the younger men had been kept busy. On the other hand, some of my Swarajist friends also want me plunge into speculation and estimate how much greater would have been their success at the polls than it has already been if the Delhi self-denying ordinance suspending our boycott propaganda had been issued at Gaya. I might answer them by suggesting another line of speculation based on characteristic self-conceit, *viz.*, whether there would have been any Swaraj party in existence at all if I had been permitted to be with them at Gaya to dissuade them from following a course of such doubtful wisdom. But all this is idle talk now. The Swaraj Party is there to-day, and even though it may be composed of some very dissimilar elements, it is undoubtedly strong enough in numbers to-day and has always been strong in the quality of its leadership. More than all else, it was permitted at Delhi to go to the polls on its own moral and religious responsibility. It has gone there, and has achieved great enough success considering what forces were arrayed against it, how short a time it had in which to organise its own forces and how greatly it

was handicapped by the fact that some of its best members were disqualified from contesting the elections owing to their having undergone longer terms of imprisonment than those which do not affect eligibility. Then, too, electoral rolls were most defective, mainly perhaps because three years ago nobody but the Liberals cared for such things and until very recently even those who ultimately joined the Swaraj Party had not finally made up their minds to contest the elections or to go to the polls. It is true a very large number of votes have been given not to the individuals that sought them, but to the Congress, and,—"tell it not in Gath; whisper it not in the streets of Ascalon"—to Mahatma Gandhi himself! There are friends of mine whose distress at such things is very deep, and who consider it a sacrilege thus to take the name of the Mahatma in vain. I greatly sympathise with them, and certainly cannot say that I approve of such political methods. But it must be remembered that those to whom the people offered such votes were immeasurably nearer to Mahatma Gandhi than those who were opposed to them. Moreover, there were some among them who were inclined to sneer in a superior sort of way at a Mahatma so little versed in the affairs of this world as to pin his faith to the silly *charkha* which even our womenfolk had discarded in these advanced days. I must here mention that my friend Desabandhu Das has told me that he had never meant that the Mahatma had blundered. They thought that he was something of a bungler and a blunderer where finesse was required in dealing with the bureaucrats and with a Viceroy who was supposed to have out-Yankeed the Yankees during the War. Their election experiences must have convinced not a few of these men that the Mahatma's name is still one to conjure with, and that whatever skill in finessing they may possess, their strength even in the Councils lies in the backing which the people who loved and revered the Mahatma were prepared to give to them as his followers and associates. This experience ia a valuable asset to them, and the good-sense, restraint and dignity which their leaders have shown in the hour of their victory in full conformity with our expectations from

them, make them a valuable element in the Congress. It is true we have no such expectations from their programme as they have themselves ; but, while removing, where really necessary, any idea that may be lurking in the people's mind that it is not the constructive programme but the Councils that bring in Swaraj, we must give to the Swarajists a perfectly free hand, and add to that our heartiest good wishes that they may succeed. We suspended at Delhi the exercise of our right to carry on a propaganda of Council-boycott ; but we surrendered no principle. Only the other day, while coming from Bombay, I had the privilege of being with my old friend, Mr. Vithalbhai Patel who wanted to talk to me about the Council Entry question. I told him that I was not prepared to listen to anything that he might say in the Council nor agree to what he proposed to do. I plainly told him that I was not prepared to adopt the Swaraj Party programme. Nor are we prepared to do that to-day, as we shall no doubt be doing if we agree to accept any responsibility of guiding the Swarajists in the Councils. This we cannot do. Obviously, the Swarajists will not be able to spare as much time for the constructive work as those of us who have not to attend to Council duties ; but I have satisfied myself that their responsible leaders intend to assist us to the best of their power and ability, and in this way strengthen their own hand also in the Councils. If they have to leave the Councils at any later stage, the work that will have by then been done outside in their constituencies through our joint efforts will ensure this much, that no bureaucratic Cromwell could say of their exit that not a dog barked when they took their departure. And if as a result of their labours in the Councils, Swaraj is achieved, I for one would certainly not refuse to accept it. If peace, harmony and goodwill were needed at Delhi to preserve the great reputation of the Congress, they are still needed to-day and needed in a greater measure to-day to enhance that reputation and to help us to carry out the constructive programme. Friends, I have reason to believe that the biggest shock of surprise that I ever gave to my enemies was, when I, the fighter, came out as a peace-maker at

Delhi. They still very much wish to divide us on this Council-entry question. They want you to war.

THE CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME

It was in the interest of this programme that I interested myself in the settlement at which we arrived at Delhi, for a whole year had been all but wasted by the major portion of the provinces in mutual recriminations, and if Mahatma Gandhi's release was to be obtained not by appeals *ad misericordiam* but through our own efforts, it was necessary to resume the work to which the Mahatma had rightly pinned his faith. I did not at the time itself realise the full extent of the havoc wrought since his removal; but the few replies that I have received to my enquiries about the details of the work done are sufficient indication that through one cause or another little work has been done. It is true there are provinces like Gujarat the work of which does credit to my friend Srijut Vallabhai Patel and to the band of devoted workers that Mahatma Gandhi left to work under him. Few provinces could show anything like as good a record of educational work, and but for Gujarat, the Khadi produced in other provinces would have remained unsold too long. Remember this. The great glory of the Mahatma, however, was not that he changed the face of Gujarat, I know that it is difficult to change, but that he also changed the face of the whole of India. No province did he leave exactly where he had found it. Gujarat is even now preparing a surprise for those who think that no area could be fit for Civil Disobedience if the Mahatma's characteristically high standard of preparation was to be retained. We have to hear of Borsad yet. But the example of Gujarat has not proved infectious enough, and we cannot afford to wrap ourselves up in self-sufficiency. The speed of the fleet is the speed of the slowest boat, and there are alas! too many slow boats in our fleet, though, thank God, all are still seaworthy. I could not place before my No-Change friends sounder canons of criticism than "A No-Changer" writing in *Young India* from Delhi has done:

There is a limit (*he writes*) beyond which reason and argument cannot go. Some conclusions are in the nature of action, and they go beyond the pale of pure rationality. Where reason fails to persuade, experience becomes the hard task-master. We realised that we had arrived at such a crisis. One year of argument and paralysis, mind, they are their own words, was tending to harden men in their Pharisaism and self-complacency. The testing time had come not only on the Swarajists, not only on the Centrists, not only on Mahomed Ali, but on us also, the No-Changers. (I hope I am also a No-Changer.) (*Laughter*) We have to submit ourselves to the discipline of facts. Since the days of the Calcutta Special Congress, Gandhism had won all along the line: and we, Gandhites, have been in continuous peril of loose thinking and draggled effort. It is good for everybody to be beaten. If there is truth in us, the very castigation of defeat will lead us to examine ourselves anew and find strength. If, on the contrary, Gandhism has become in our hands a plea for lethargy and refusal to re-think the implications of fast-developing reality, we are not the true followers of our Chief, we are not worthy to be the custodians of his message to the world. Reality—that is the ultimate touchstone.

Yes, Reality is the ultimate touch-stone, the truest and the surest that ever existed and Swarajists and No-Changers, and you and I, all of us, friends shall be tested and measured by Reality. That is why I preach to you the gospel of work. It is not as easy a gospel to practise as it is easy to preach, and that is why we have more critics than workers. But work well done furnishes an exhilarating experience which the sterile pleasures of criticism even in victories can never equal. As the Sanskrit poet, referring to the creative effort of poetry, says: "Little does the barren woman know of the pain and anguish of a mother's labours and less still of the indescribable joy of motherhood at the sight and touch of the new-born babe." Through labour alone shall a free India be re-born.

THE BARDOLI PROGRAMME TO BE CARRIED OUT

You will no doubt ask me what should be our work; and my reply after the most careful consideration is that we cannot better the much-maligned Bardoli programme. If we continue to give up each item of work on finding difficulties and obstacles in our way, we shall never accomplish anything. Many people tell you Non-Co-operation has failed when they only mean that they, or we,

both, have failed to rise to the height of our ideal. And yet, as I have already told you, the steps proposed by the Mahatma are easy. Remember what the commonest of common soldiers is prepared to sacrifice when you feel that you must re-start your practice as a lawyer, or file your law-suit, or send your boy to a better-equipped but co-operating school.

KHADI WORK AND WOMEN

As for the man who cannot even wear khadi, it is no use taking him into serious consideration. And yet he is not unpatriotic, nor hopelessly selfish, but only lazy and indolent. Well, he has got to be roused out of his indolence, and the best and the most unfailing agency for this is the womanhood of India. Whosoever may change and fall from the high ideal of our great chief, the women of India are true to him, true to the nation and true to themselves. With a few expert men like Seth Jamnalal Bajaj and Maganlal Bhai and Chaganlal Bhai, Gandhi to assist and advise them, and a full complement of book-keepers and clerks, etc., our sisters should be able to take the entire charge of the Khadi work in every province and district. Men may go to gaol, and men may come back, but the women of India should go on working our Khadi department for ever.

The other departments must also be organised, and the next in importance to Khadi is the department of National Education. I feel sorry that I did not press sufficiently hard at Bezwada, in 1921, for the creation of a Central Board of Education. But now a Central Educational Board and Provincial Boards must be created, and the education of our boys and girls must be seriously taken in hand. I need not go through the whole list of departments, for we cannot afford to neglect any item of the Bardoli programme. But we must follow the plan of 1921, and, while working all simultaneously, we must concentrate on particular departments during particular periods of the next year Our women folk must go on with the Charkha for evewhile men might go back to jails and return from them

Friends, I have proposed to you something much more important. It is a most beneficial suggestion. We have scores of unemployed people, people who have left their practice : clever men, honest men ; they have all come out at the bidding of the Mahatma. On the other hand, we find that there is plenty of work to do, but no workers to do it. The only solution, I say, the best possible solution is this. Give the job to the man without a job. Let us have a permanent secretariat. When we are fighting a big Empire is it not a shame to us that my friend, Mr. Gopalakrishnayya, the Working Secretary, has not a secretariat even as small as in a district. We must have a large permanent establishment to do the executive work of the Congress, no matter who goes to the jail or who does not. These people must be given bare living wages. Of course, our Governors will sneer at them. Rs. 10,000 will sneer at Rs. 100. Rs. 25,000 will sneer at Rs. 250 a month. The Lee Commission's witnesses, those Oliver Twists who have had too much and are still greedily shouting for more and more, would, of course, refer to us as cheats. A system that would require martyrs to-day would be worked by cheats to-morrow. What do the Europeans in South Africa say ? It is not a question of colour at all, it is the Indian standard of living. They want our standard of living to be raised. Our Mahatma has greatly reduced it. The lower it goes, the better the people practise plain living and high thinking. These gentlemen do not live plainly and I know the depth of their degradation of thoughts. It is they that would sneer at us. But let us have a permanent secretariat for the Congress and send out our workers into the provinces. There should be a Khadi Committee, a Temperance Committee, an Untouchability Committee, etc. All these departments should be carefully organised and then let us fight the battle of India. When India knows that we are going to do all this work on an organised basis, she will pour out her funds. She would readily give us a crore in one month, while she gave it to the Mahatma in 3 months. (*Cheers*). I was told in the Subjects

Committee that we should abolish the four-anna franchise, because it does not bring enough finance. If this is done, a few hundreds of men will sit together and manage the whole of the Congress. I want the whole of the Congress to be carried on by the four-anna members only. If we get one crore of members in one year, we can have 25 lakhs of rupees by the way of membership subscriptions. (*Hear, hear*). Once this machiney is set up and these men go on collecting subscriptions, I would put forward the system prevailing in England,—one week's board and lodging for actual work done and then think of next week's; otherwise you starve. (*Applause*).

THE PROVISION OF FUNDS

But all this is idle talk without funds, and the provision of funds is one item which requires concentration all through the year. When the country knows that it is only by carrying out the Mahatma's programme of work that we can manufacture the key of Yerrowada gaol, and that no work is possible without solvency, it will not fail to respond to our call. But apart from large donations to be appealed for at some fixed time, we must tap permanent, though small, sources of revenue, and enable the poor to go on contributing their mites to the National Chest. Fixed monthly contributions must be arranged for and other similar means of securing the poor man's assistance at intervals and in ways suited to his convenience must be thought out in addition to a well-organised national 'drive' for securing at least as many members of the Congress as the number of Indians who have been enfranchised. If, however, we work with a will, a full crore should not prove too many.

PERMANENT SECRETARIATS AND DEPARTMENTAL ESTABLISHMENTS

And yet much as money may be necessary for working the Mahatma's programme, a powerful organisation is just as necessary to secure money. This cannot be in the main an organisation run by unpaid men. It is astonishing how

we got on so long with our national work covering the whole area of this sub-continent with a paid establishment hardly large enough for a single department in a single district. We are face to face with a strange situation. On the one side we need competent, zealous and thoroughly reliable workers to carry on the national work, and have not got them. On the other hand, we have an army of the unemployed, particularly the lawyers who have been so hard hit by the Non-Co-operation programme, and they are very far from being unemployable. It is time that we accepted the obvious and the only possible solution of this double difficulty. We may pay our workers only a living wage on the reduced scale of the era; but that living wage must be paid to those splendid workers who have made great sacrifices for the sake of the nation. Remember, a system that requires martyrs to work it gets worked in the next generation by cheats. And, in any case, even martyrs have to be fed and clothed before they quit this world. India is witnessing to-day the spectacle of greedy foreign servants clamouring like so many Oliver Twists for more when they have already had much more than even gluttony as a rule demands. The Indian Civil Servant, who is seldom Indian, or civil, or a servant, already gets paid more than any class of public servant of similar merit anywhere else in the world. It is he who always sets the pace to members of other services and thus continues to drain the resources of one of the poorest countries in the world. And he is doing this again so soon after the last increase in his emoluments. And yet it is he who accuses Indians engaged in the service of the nation of dishonest practices. I have no doubt that the moment he learns that the Congress is asked to pay the poorest of poor wages to such national workers, he and his supporters in the Press will commence their old game of vilifying men who are the truest servants of India. Those who receive their wages in hundreds will be assailed by those who receive them in thousands and yet serve India so poorly. But this is part of the day's work and we must not mind it.

This, to my mind, is the most urgent need of the Congress, and I trust you will take steps to create an efficient organisation which will carry on the work of the Congress year in and year out. A proper National Secretariat, if possible located in some central place like Delhi, similar Provincial Secretariats and District Offices must be organised, and work in these secretariats and offices must be properly differentiated into the various departments which we need to maintain. The Working Committee itself should be composed of men who are able to attend frequent meetings either at a central place, or wherever required by the exigencies of the moment.

Of course, we must see that all organisations are doing practical work which is capable of being checked and estimated, and, that expenditure is not allowed, after the initial month or thereabouts, to exceed revenue. I understand that the Salvation Army in England when it sends out workers to new centres pays them for a week's board and lodging in advance, and during that week they have to earn enough to pay their way in the following week. Later on, they are required to send a definite contribution to the Central Organisation. We shall have to follow some such system with regard to those of our workers who are engaged in enrolling Congress members. Once this machinery is set up, I feel confident the country can be roused again, and we shall be able to beat in 1924 the record of 1921. Remember, there is one great difference between now and 1921. Then, the Mahatma was free to organise and control the work, but to-day, although we shall miss him greatly, his very absence from our midst should stimulate us to work with redoubled energy. What would Christianity be without the Cross and Islam without the Tragedy of Kerbala? As I have said before we have not yet made full use of our Cross. Friends, let us do it now if we bear any love towards our absent leader, and, calling upon the nation to give us its full backing, free the Country and break open the great Bastile which keeps Mahatma Gandhi and thousands of his disciples in chains.

THE SIKHS AND THE MAHARAJA SAHEB OF NABHA

We have before us the example of our Sikh brothers whose courage, fortitude and, above all perfect non-violence excite my envy. The Maharaja Saheb of Nabha has been deposed, and the words in which the head of this foreign Government proclaims to us his firm resolve to keep him out of his State are only so much veiled blasphemy:

> The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
> Moves on; nor all your Piety nor Wit
> Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
> Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.

We hold no brief for the Maharaja Saheb, but this much is certain, that even if all that his detractors say of him be true, he was not deposed for any such shortcomings, but for his virtues. I am myself the subject of an Indian Ruler and have had fairly intimate experience of several Indian States. I used to be approached very frequently by those friends who desired to see political reforms carried out in Indian States. But I used to put them off with the observation that the Indian States are our own, even though to-day they may prove far more unsafe for patriotic men than the rest of India. I used to add that once the rest of India had won Swaraj, Indian States would undergo a sea-change with astonishing rapidity. In the meantime it should be our policy not to rouse the suspicions of the rulers of these States, and to avail ourselves of every opportunity to prove to them that we are not unmindful of their difficulties nor indifferent to what they, too, have to suffer from this foreign bureaucracy. I did not know at the time that the Government would provide such an opportunity so soon. But now that it has been provided let us avail ourselves of it, for in doing so we shall also be safeguarding the interests of religion. The Maharaja Saheb of Nabha has suffered, at least partly, because he strongly sympathised with his co-religionists in their efforts to free themselves from the foreign bureaucratic incubus, and to reform their sacred Gurudwaras. And the Sikhs in their turn are suffering because they have had the courage to stand up for one of our Indian

Rulers whom the bureaucracy desires to keep in perpetual dependence upon itself. But, as I have said before, the recent action of Government in declaring the Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee and the Akali Dal to be unlawful assemblies is a blow aimed not only at those bodies, or at the entire Sikh community; it is a challenge to the entire nation. Each community that dares to live will be similarly dealt with if we shrink from accepting the challenge to-day, and it will only be a question, of whose turn at the tumbrils will come next?

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

We have already resolved to offer some assistance to our Sikh brethren so that we may not be guilty of indulging in lip-sympathy only. But something more than that is required. A better opportunity for Civil Disobedience at least on a provincial scale never presented itself since the arrest of the Mahatma; but each province is divided against itself and it is no use disguising from ourselves the fact that to organise Civil Disobedience is no easy matter. We must be sure of our capacity to undergo unlimited sufferings, and since constructive work has not been done this year even as well as it was done in 1921, there is little to indicate how much suffering the nation is prepared to endure. If, however, we resume our constructive work with redoubled energy, Civil Disobedience will not remain a mere possibility, and the Civil Disobedience Committee appointed at Delhi will then be able to do much more fruitful work. For it must also be recognised that Civil Disobedience must be resorted to before Swaraj can be won. Let there be no mistake about this. There must be no shrinking from sacrifice, and this observation I would like to address in particular to such of my friends as have already undergone imprisonment for courageously standing up for their rights. If that experience makes them shrink from doing such work as may lead to a second period of imprisonment, then, I say, they are not the men for us. The first imprisonment is obviously wasted upon them, for they should never have undertaken to do any national work, or should, at least, have made apologies to their foreign

masters as soon as they were punished. To have undergone all this suffering and then to repent is the height of folly. As I wrote in the Bijapur gaol :

> If there is a sin even greater than sinlessness it is repentance over sin after the award of punishment.

THE SHORT CUT TO LIBERTY

Friends, I have given you a long enough programme of work, and I cannot help it if it is a little too insipid for your tastes. There is no royal road to Liberty. But there is one short cut, and that is the readiness to follow the road to the grave. (*Laughter.*) Death for a great cause provides the most piquant sauce for the most tasteless dish, and I make bold to say that if our Working Committee took it into its head one day to resolve that all its members should prepare themselves to die and that the resolution was not only a "resolution" merely according to conventional phraseology, but embodied the members' grim determination, I could guarantee them Swaraj within a year. (*Hear, hear.*) And if it was the All-India Congress Committee that made such a resolve for itself, instead of quarrelling about Council-entry (*laughter*), Swaraj could be won within a month. But, friends, Swaraj is in *your* hands and can be won *to-day* if each of you resolves to be ready to die at the country's call. If, however, we are not prepared to do this, and object to the Bardoli programme because it is dull and drab, *Charkha apkhars*, then it is uselsss to talk of changing the Congress creed. . . . . In 1921 we gave a year to ourselves and the same period to the Government; but our part of the contract was not fulfilled, and we could not demand Swaraj as the price of our unfinished work. Let us go back to Nagpur, and with trust in our Maker and a prayer addressed to Him to give us courage, fortitude, perseverance and wisdom, begin the great work once more that our great leader has outlined for us. If only we do not prove unworthy of him we shall win back our lost liberty and it will not be as a prayer for success, but as the declaration the announcement of victory won, that we shall then raise the old, old cry :

MAHATMA GANDHI KI JAI ! (*Loud and Prolonged Cheers.*)

Thirty ninth Congress—Belgaum—1924

MAHATMA GANDHI

FRIENDS,—It was after much misgiving that I accepted the burden of the honour you have done me to-day. The unique honour for this year should have been bestowed upon Shrimati Sarojini Naidu, who did such wonderful work both in Kenya and South Africa. But it was not to be. The developments both internal and external have necessitated my acceptance of the burden. I know that I shall have your support in my attempt to do justice to the high office to which you have called me.

At the outset, let me note with respectful feelings the deaths during the year of Bi Amman, Sir Asutosh Mukerji, Mr. Bhupendra Nath Basu, Dr. Subramania Iyer and Mr. Dal Bahadur Giri at home, and of Messrs. Rustomjee and P. K. Naydu in South Africa. I tender in your name my respectful condolences to the bereaved families.

RETROSPECTIVE

From the September of 1920 the Congress has been principally an institution for developing strength from within. It has ceased to function by means of resolutions addressed to the Government for redress of grievances. It did so because it ceased to believe in the beneficial character of the existing system of government. The breach of faith with the Mussalmans of India was the first rude shock to the people's faith in the Government. The Rowlatt Act and O'Dwyerism culminating in the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre, opened the eyes of the people to the true nature of the system. At the same time it was realised that existence of the system depended upon the co-operation whether conscious or unconscious, and whether voluntary or forced, of the people. With the view, therefore of mending or ending the system it was decided to try to begin

withdrawing voluntary co-operation from the top. At the Special Session of the Congress at Calcutta in 1920, the boycott of Government titles, law courts, educational institutions, legislative bodies, and foreign cloth was resolved upon. All the boycotts were more or less taken up by the parties concerned. Those who could not or would not, retired from the Congress. I do not propose to trace the chequered career of the Non-Co-operation movement. Though, not a single boycott was anywhere near completion, every one of them had undoubtedly the effect of diminishing the prestige of the particular institution boycotted.

The most important boycott was the boycott of violence. Whilst it appeared at one time to be entirely successful, it was soon discovered that the non-violence was only skin-deep. It was the passive non-violence of helplessness, not the enlightened non-violence of resourcefulness. The result was an eruption of intolerance against those who did not non-co-operate. This was violence of a subtler type. In spite, however, of this grave defect, I make bold to say that the propaganda of non-violence checked the outbreak of physical violence which would certainly have broken out, had not non-violent non-co-operation come into being. It is my deliberate conviction that non-violent non-co-operation has given to the people a consciousness of their strength. It has brought to the surface the hidden powers in the people of resistance through suffering. It has caused an awakening among the masses which perhaps no other method could have.

Though, therefore, non-violent non-co-operation has not brought us Swaraj, though it has brought about certain deplorable results and though the institutions that were sought to be boycotted are still flourishing, in my humble opinion, non-violent non-co-operation as a means of attaining political freedom has come to stay and that even its partial success has brought us nearer Swaraj. There is no mistaking the fact that the capacity for suffering for the sake of a cause must advance it.

A HALT

But we are face to face with a situation that compels us to cry halt. For whilst individuals hold firmly to their belief in non-co-operation, the majority of those who are immediately concerned, have practically lost faith in it, with the exception of boycott of foreign cloth. Scores of lawyers have resumed practice. Some even regret having ever given it up. Many who had given up Councils have returned to them and the number of those who believe in Council entry is on the increase. Hundreds of boys and girls who gave up Government schools and colleges have repented of their action and have returned to them. I hear that Government schools and colleges can hardly cope with the demand for admission. In these circumstances these boycotts cannot be worked as part of the National programme, unless the Congress is prepared to do without the classes directly affected. But I hold it to be just as impracticable to keep these classes out of the Congress as it would be now to keep the non-co-operators out. They must both remain in the Congress without either party interfering with or hostilily criticising the other. What is applicable to Hindu-Muslim unity is, I feel, applicable to the unity among different political groups. We must tolerate each other and trust to time to convert the one or the other to the opposite belief. We must go further. We must plead with the Liberals and others who have seceded to rejoin the Congress. If non-co-operation is suspended, there is no reason why they should keep out. The advance must be from us, Congressmen. We must cordially invite them and make it easy for them to come in.

You are perhaps now able to see why I entered into the agreement with the Swarajists.

FOREIGN CLOTH BOYCOTT

You will observe that one boycott has been retained. Out of regard for the sentiment of a English friend the word 'Boycott' has been changed in the agreement into 'refusal to use foreign cloth.' There is no doubt a bad

odour about the word 'Boycott.' It usually implies hatred. So far as I am concerned, I have not intended the word to bear any such meaning. The boycott has reference not to British but to foreign cloth. That boycott is not merely a right but a duty. It is as much a duty as boycott of foreign waters would be if they were imported to substitute the waters of the Indian rivers. This, however, is a digression.

What I wanted to say was that the agreement saves and emphasises the boycott of foreign cloth. For me it is an effective substitute for violent methods. Just as certain acts such as personal abuse, irritating conduct, lying, causing hurt and murder are symbols of violence, similarly courtesy, inoffensive conduct, truthfulness, etc., are symbols of non-violence. And so to me is boycott of foreign cloth a symbol of non-violence. Revolutionary crime is intended to exert pressure. But it is the insane pressure of anger and ill-will. I contend that non-violent acts exert pressure far more effective than violent acts, for that pressure comes from good will and gentleness. Boycott of foreign cloth exerts such pressure. We import the largest amount of foreign cloth from Lancashire. It is also by far the largest of all our imports, sugar being next. Britain's chief interest centres round the Lancashire trade with India. It is the one thing more than any other that has ruined the Indian peasant and imposed partial idleness upon him by depriving him of the one supplementary occupation he had. Boycott of foreign cloth is therefore a necessity if he is to live. The plan, therefore, is not merely to induce the peasant to refuse to buy the cheap and nice-looking foreign fabric but also by teaching him to utilize his spare hours in carding and spinning cotton and getting it woven by the village weavers to dress himself in khaddar so woven and thus to save him the cost of buying foreign and for that matter even Indian mill-made cloth. Thus boycott of foreign cloth by means of hand-spinning and hand-weaving, *i.e.*, khaddar, not only saves the peasant's money but it enables us, workers, to render social service of a first class order. It brings us into

direct touch with the villagers. It enables us to give them real political education and teach them to become self-reliant. Organisation of khaddar is thus infinitely better than co-operative societies or any other form of village organisation. It is fraught with the highest political consequence, because it removes the greatest immoral temptation from Britain's way. I call the Lancashire trade immoral, because it was raised and is sustained on the ruin of millions of India's peasants. And as one immorality leads to another, the many proved immoral acts of Britain are traceable to this one immoral traffic. If therefore this one great temptation is removed from Britain's path by India's voluntary effort, it would be good for India, good for Britain, and as Britain is to-day the predominant world-power, good even for humanity.

I do not endorse the proposition that supply follows demand. On the contrary, demand is often artificially created by unscrupulous vendors. And if a nation is bound, as I hold it is, like individuals to comply with a code of moral conduct, then it must consider the welfare of those whose wants it seeks to supply. It is wrong and immoral for a nation to supply for instance intoxicating liquor to those who are addicted to drink. What is true of intoxicants is true of grain or cloth, if the discontinuance of their cultivation or manufacture in the country to which foreign grain or cloth are exported results in enforced idleness or penury. These latter hurt a man's soul and body just as much as intoxication. Depression is but excitement upside down and hence equally disastrous in its results and often more so because we have not yet learnt to regard as immoral or sinful the depression of idleness or penury.

BRITAIN'S DUTY

It is then I hold the duty of Great Britain to regulate her exports with due regard to the welfare of India, as it is India's to regulate her imports with due regard to her own welfare. That economics is untrue which ignores or disregards moral values. The extension of the law of non-violence in the domain of economics means nothing less

than the introduction of moral values as a factor to be considered in regulating international commerce. And I must confess that my ambition is nothing less than to see international relations placed on a moral basis through India's efforts. I do not despair of cultivation of limited mass non-violence. I refuse to believe that the tendency of human nature is always downward.

The fruition of the boycott of foreign cloth through hand-spinning and khaddar is calculated not only to bring about a political result of the first magnitude, it is calculated also to make the poorest of India, whether men or women, conscious of their strength and make them partakers in the struggle for India's freedom.

FOREIGN *versus* BRITISH

It is hardly necessary now to demonstrate the futility not to say the violent nature, of boycott of British cloth or better still British goods as so many patriots have suggested. I am considering the boycott purely from the point of view of India's good. All British goods do not harm us. Some goods such as English books we need for our intellectual or spiritual benefit. As regards cloth, it is not merely British cloth that harms us, but all foreign cloth and for that matter to a lesser extent even mill-made cloth injures us. Boycott brought about anyhow of British cloth cannot yield the same results as such boycott brought about by hand-spinning and khaddar. This necessitates exclusion at least of all foreign cloth. The exclusion is not intended as a punishment. It is a necessity of national existence.

OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED

But, say the critics, the spinning wheel has not taken, it is not exciting enough, it is an occupation only for women, it means a return to the middle ages, it is a vain effort against the majestic march of scientific knowledge for which machinery stands. In my humble opinion, India's need is not excitement but solid work. For the millions, solid work itself is excitement and tonic at the same time. The fact is that we have not given the spinning wheel

enough trial ; I am sorry to have to say that many of us have not given it a serious thought. Even the members of the All-India Congress Committee have failed to carry out the series of resolutions on hand-spinning which they themselves have passed from time to time. The majority of us have simply not believed in it. In the circumstances, it is hardly just to say that spinning has failed for want of excitement about it. To say that it is merely an old woman's occupation is to ignore facts. Spinning mills are a multiplication of spinning wheels. They are managed by men. It is time that we got out of this superstition that some occupations are beneath the dignity of men. Under normal conditions no doubt spinning will be the occupation of the gentle sex. But the State of the future will always have to keep some men at the spinning wheel so as to make improvements in it within the limitations which as a cottage industry it must have. I must inform you that the progress, the mechanism of the wheel has made, would have been impossible, if some of us men had not worked at it and had not thought about it day and night.

MACHINERY

I wish, too, you would dismiss from your minds the views attributed to me about machinery. In the first instance, I am no more trying to present for national acceptance all my views on machinery, than I am presenting the whole of my belief in non-violence. The spinning wheel is itself an exquisite piece of machinery. My head daily bows in reverence to its unknown inventor. What I do resent is the wanton and wicked destruction of the one cottage industry of India that kept the wolf from the doors of thousands of homes scattered over a surface 1,900 miles long, 1,500 miles broad.

SPINNING FRANCHISE

You will not now wonder at my passion for the spinning wheel, nor will you wonder why I have ventured to present it for introduction in the franchise, and why Pandit Motilal Nehru and Deshbandhu Das have accepted it on behalf of the Swaraj Party. If I had my way, there

would be no one on the Congress register who is unwilling to spin or who would not wear khaddar on all occasions. I am, however, thankful for what the Swaraj Party has accepted. The modification is a concession to weakness or want of faith. But it must serve as a spur to greater effort on the part of those who have full faith in the wheel and khaddar.

NO OTHER MESSAGE

I have thus dilated upon the spinning wheel because I have no better or other message for the nation. I know no other effective method for the attainment of Swaraj if it is to be by 'peaceful and legitimate means'. As I have already remarked it is the only substitute for violence that can be accepted by the whole nation. I swear by Civil Disobedience. But Civil Disobedience for the attainment of Swaraj is an impossibility unless and until we have attained the power of achieving boycott of foreign cloth. You will now easily perceive why I should be a useless guide for the Congress if my views about the spinning wheel are not acceptable to you. Indeed, you would be justified in regarding me, as some friends do, as a hindrance to national progress, if you consider me to be wrong in my exposition of the doctrine underlying the spinning wheel. If it does not appeal to your heads as well as your hearts, you will be wanting in your duty in not rejecting my lead. Let it no longer be said, as Lord Willingdon very properly once said of us, that we had not the strength and courage to say 'No'. Indeed, your rejection of my proposal, if you do not believe in it, will be a step towards Swaraj.

Hindu-Muslim unity is not less important than the spinning wheel. It is the breath of our life. I do not need to occupy much of your time on this question because the necessity of it is almost universally accepted. I say 'almost' because I know some Hindus and some Mussalmans who prefer the present condition of dependence on Great Britain if they cannot have either wholly Hindu or wholly Mussalman India. Happily their number is small.

I share Maulana Shaukat Ali's robust optimism that the present tension is a mere temporary distemper. The

Khilafat agitation in which Hindus made common cause with their Mussalman brethren and the non-co-operation that followed it, caused an awakening among the hitherto slumbering masses. It has given a consciousness to the classes as well as the masses. Interested persons who were disappointed during the palmy days of non-co-operation, now that it has lost the charm of novelty, have found their opportunity and are trading upon the religious bigotry or selfishness of both the communities. The result is written in the history of the feuds of the past two years. Religion has been travestied. Trifles have been dignified by the name of religious tenets which, the fanatics claim, must be observed at any cost. Economic and political causes have been brought into play for the sake of fomenting trouble. The culminating point was reached in Kohat. The tragedy was aggravated by the callous indifference of the local authority. I must not carry to examine the causes or to distribute the blame. I have not the material for the task even if I was minded for it. Suffice it to say that the Hindu refugees fled for fear of their lives. There is in Kohat an overwhelming Mussalman majority. They have in so far as is possible under a foreign domination effective political control. It is up to them, therefore, to show that the Hindus are as safe in the midst of their majority, as they would be if the whole population of Kohat was Hindu. The Mussalmans of Kohat may not rest satisfied till they have brought back to Kohat every one of the refugees. I hope that the Hindus would not fall into the trap laid for them by the Government and would resolutely decline to go back till Mussalmans of Kohat have given them full assurances as to their lives and property.

The Hindus can live in the midst of an overwhelming Mussalman majority only if the latter are willing to receive and treat them as friends and equals, just as Mussalmans, if in a minority, must depend for honourable existence in the midst of a Hindu majority on the latter's friendliness. A Government can give protection against thieves and robbers, but not even a Swaraj Government will be able to

protect people against a wholesale boycott by one community or another. Governments can deal with abnormal situations. When quarrels become a normal thing of life, it is called civil war and parties must fight it out themselves. The present Government being foreign, in reality a veiled miltiary rule, has resources at its command for its protection against any combination we can make and has, therefore, the power, if it has the will, to deal with our class feuds. But no Swaraj Government with any pretension to being a popular Government can possibly be organised and maintained on a war footing. A Swaraj Government means a Government established by the free joint will of Hindus, Mussalmans and others. Hindus and Mussalmans, if they desire Swaraj, have perforce to settle their differences amicably.

The Unity Conference at Delhi has paved the way for a settlement of religious differences. The Committee of the All-Parties' Conference is among other things expected to find a workable and just solution of the political differences not only between Hindus and Mussalmans but between all classes and all castes, sects or denominations. Our goal must be removal, at the earliest possible moment, of communal or sectional representation. A common electorate must impartially elect its representatives on the sole ground of merit. Our services must be likewise impartially manned by the most qualified men and women. But till that time comes and communal jealousies or preferences become a thing of the past, minorities who suspect the motives of majorities must be allowed their way. The majorities must set the example of self-sacrifice.

UNTOUCHABILITY

Untouchability is another hindrance to Swaraj. Its removal is just as essential for Swaraj as the attainment of Hindu-Muslim unity. This is an essentially Hindu question and Hindus cannot claim or take Swaraj till they have restored the liberty of the suppressed classes. They have sunk with the latter's suppression. Historians tell us that the Aryan invaders treated the original inhabitants of Hindustan precisely as the English invaders treat us, if

not much worse. If so, our helotry is a just retribution for our having created an untouchable class. The sooner we remove the blot, the better it is for us, Hindus. But the priests tell us that untouchability is a divine appointment. I am certain that the priests are wrong. It is a blasphemy to say that God set apart any portion of humanity as untouchable. And Hindus who are Congressmen have to see to it that they break down the barrier at the earliest possible moment. The Vaikom satyagrahis are showing us the way. They are carrying on their battle with gentleness and firmness. They have patience, courage, and faith. Any movement in which these qualities are exhibited becomes irresistible.

I would, however, warn the Hindu brethren against the tendency which one sees now-a-days of exploiting the suppressed classes for a political end. To remove untouchability is a penance that caste Hindus owe to Hinduism and to themselves. The purification required is not of untouchables but of the so-called superior castes. There is no vice that is special to the untouchables not even dirt and insanitation. It is our arrogance which blind us, 'superior' Hindus, to our own blemishes and which magnifies those of our down-trodden brethren whom we have suppressed and whom we keep under suppression. Religions like nations are being weighed in the balance. God's grace and revelation are the monopoly of no race or nation. They descend equally upon all who wait upon God. That religion and that nation will be blotted out of the face of the earth which pins its faith to injustice, untruth or violence. God is Light, not darkness. God is Love, not hate. God is Truth, not untruth. God alone is Great. We, His creatures are but dust. Let us be humble and recognise the place of the lowliest of His creatures. Krishna honoured Sudama in his rags as he honoured no one else. Love is the root of religion or sacrifice and this perishable body is the root of self or irreligion, says Tulsidas. Whether we win Swaraj or not, the Hindus have to purify themselves before they can hope to revive the Vedic philosophy and make it a living reality.

SWARAJ SCHEME

But the spinning wheel, Hindu-Muslim unity and removal of untouchability are only means to an end. The end we do not know. For me it is enough to know the means. Means and end are converitable terms in my philosophy of life. But I have long professed my conversion to the view pressed upon the public by Babu Bhagvan Das that the public must know the end, not vaguely but precisely. They must know the full definition of Swaraj, *i.e.*, the scheme of Swaraj which all India wants and must fight for. Happily the Committee appointed by the All Parties' Conference is charged with that mission and let us hope that the Committee will be able to produce a scheme that will be acceptable to all parties. May I suggest for its consideration the following points ?

1. The qualification for the franchise should be neither property nor position but manual work, such for example as suggested for the Congress Franchise. Literary or property test have proved to be elusive. Manual work gives an opportunity to all who wish to take part in the government and the well-being of the State.

2. The ruinous military expenditure should be curtailed to the proportion necessary for protection of life and property in normal times.

3. Administration of justice should be cheapened and with that end in view the final court of appeal should be not in London but in Delhi. Parties to civil suits must be compelled in the majority of cases to refer their disputes to arbitration, the decisions of these Panchayats to be final except in cases of corruption or obvious misapplication of law. Multiplicity of intermediate courts should be avoided. Case-law should be abolished and the general procedure should be simplified. We have slavishly followed the cumbrous and worn out English procedure. The tendency in the Colonies is to simplify the procedure so as to make it easy for litigants to plead their own cases.

4. Revenues from intoxicating liquors and drugs should be abolished.

5. Salaries of the Civil and Military Service should be brought down to a level compatible with the general condition of the country.

6. There should be re-distribution of provinces on a linguistic basis with as complete autonomy as possible for every province for its internal administration and growth.

7. Appointment of a commission to examine all the monopolies given to foreigners and, subject to the findings of the commission, full guarantees to be given for all vested rights justly acquired.

8. Full guarantee of their status to the Indian Chiefs without any hindrance from the Central Government subject to the right of asylum to subjects of these States who, not being offenders againt the Penal Code, may seek it in Self-governing India.

9. Repeal of all arbitrary powers.

10. The highest post be open to all who may be otherwise fit. Examinations for the Civil and Military Services to be in India.

11. Recognition of complete religious freedom to various denominations subject to mutual forbearance.

12. The official language for provincial governments, legislatures and courts, within a definite period, to be the vernacular of the province; of the Privy Council, the final court of appeal, to be Hindustani; the script to be either Devanagari or Persian. The language of the Central Government and of the Central Legislature to be also Hindustani. The language of inter-national diplomacy to be English.

I trust you will not laugh at what may appear to you to be extravagance of thought in the foregoing sketch of some of the requirements of Swaraj as I would have it. We may not have the power to-day to take or receive or do the things I have mentioned. Have we the will? Let us at least cultivate the desire. Before I leave this highly

attractive, because speculative, theme let me assure the Committee in charge of the drafting of a Swaraj Scheme, that I claim for my suggestion no more attention than it would give to any single individual's. I have incorporated them in my address only to gain greater currency for them than they would perhaps otherwise receive.

INDEPENDENCE

The above sketch presupposes the retention of the British connection on perfectly honourable and absolutely equal terms. But I know that there is a section among Congressmen who want under every conceivable circumstance complete independence of Britain. They will not have even an equal partnership. In my opinion if the British Government mean what they say and honestly help us to equality, it would be a greater triumph than a complete severence of the British connection. I would therefore strive for Swaraj within the Empire but would not hesitate to sever all connection, if severence became a necessity through Britain's own fault. I would thus throw the burden of separation on the British people. The better mind of the world desires to-day not absolutely independent States warring one against another but a federation of friendly inter-dependent States. The consummation of that event may be far off. I want to make no grand claim for our country. But I see nothing grand or impossible about our expressing our readiness for universal interdependence rather than independence. It should rest with Britain to say that she will have no real alliance with India. I desire the ability to be totally independent without asserting the independence. Any scheme that I would frame, while Britain declares her goal about India to be complete equality within the Empire, would be that of alliance and not of independence without alliance. I would urge every Congressman not to be insistent on independence in each and every case, not because there is anything impossible about it, but because it is wholly unnecessary till it has become perfectly manifest that Britain really means subjugation in spite of her declaration to the contrary.

THE SWARAJ PARTY

So far, then, I have considered the contents of the agreement and the general questions arising from it. Not much need be said about the status of equality given to the Swaraj Party. I wish I could have avoided it, not because the Party is not worthy, but because I do not share its views about Council-entry. But if I must remain in the Congress, even lead it, I must recognise the facts as they are. It was easy enough for me to go out of the Congress or to decline the honour of presiding. But it was not, so I thought and still think, in the interest of the country for me to take that step. The Swaraj Party represents if not a majority, at least a strong and growing minority in the Congress. If I was not to divide the Congress on the issue of its status, I was bound to agree to its conditions, so long as they were not in conflict with my conscience. They are not, in my opinion, unreasonable. The Swarajists want to use the name of the Congress for their policy. A formula had to be found for their doing so without their pledging or binding the changers to their policy. One of the ways of doing it was to give it the authority and the responsibility financial and executive with regard to the framing and the prosecution of their policy. The Congress as a whole could not guide that policy without sharing the responsibility. And as I could not take the responsibility, and as I apprehend no No-changers can, I could not be party to shaping the policy nor could I shape it without my heart in it. And the heart can only go where the belief is. I know that the sole authority to the Swaraj Party to use the name of Congress in regard to the Council programme makes somewhat awkward the position of the other parties wishing to join the Congress. But I fear it is inevitable. The Swaraj Party can not be expected to surrender the advantage it possesses. After all, it wants the advantage not for itself but for the service of the country. All parties have or can have that ambition or no other. I hope therefore that the others will join the Congress and work within to affect the course

of the country's policy. Dr. Besant has led the way in that direction. I know that she would have many things done otherwise, but she is content to come hoping to bring round the electorate to her view by working within the Congress. The No-changers can, in my humble opinion, vote for the agreement with a clear conscience. The only national programme jointly to be worked by all the parties is khaddar, Hindu-Muslim unity and, for the Hindus, removal of untouchability. Is not this after all what I want?

PURELY SOCIAL REFORM?

It has been suggested that this programme turns the Congress into a purely social reform organisation. I beg to differ from that view. Everything that is absolutely essential for Swaraj is more than merely social work and must be taken up by the Congress. It is not suggested that the Congress should confine its activity for all time to this work only. But it is suggested that the Congress should for the coming year concentrate the whole of its energy on the work of construction, or as I have otherwise described it the work of internal growth.

Nor does the agreement exhaust the list of constructive items that the Congress must handle. Those I am about to mention are of the highest importance, but they, being non-contentious and not absolutely essential for Swaraj as the foregoing three items, find no mention in the agreement.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS

One such is the maintenance of national educational institutions. Probably the public do not know that next to khaddar the running of national educational institutions has been the most successful. These can not be given up so long as even a few pupils are left. It must be a point of honour with the respective provinces to keep up their colleges and schools. Suspension of non-co-operation should not have any injurious effect on these institutions. On the contrary, greater effort than ever before should be made to maintain and strengthen them. Most provinces

have their national schools and colleges. Gujarat alone has a national university, maintained at an annual cost of Rs. 1,00,000, and having control of 3 Colleges and 70 Schools with 9,000 pupils. It has acquired its own ground at Ahmedabad and has already spent Rs, 2,05,323 in buildings. Throughout the country, finest and silent work has been done by the non-co-operating students. Theirs is a great and noble sacrifice. From a worldly standpoint they have perhaps lost the prospect of brilliant careers. I suggest to them however that from the national standpoint they have gained more than they have lost. They left their schools or colleges, because it was through them that the youth of the nation were insulted and humiliated in the Punjab. The first link in the chain of our bondage is forged in these institutions. The corresponding national institutions, however inefficiently managed they may be, are the factories where the first instruments of our freedom are forged. After all, the hope of the future centres round the boys and girls studying in these national institutions. I therefore regard the upkeep of these institutions as a first charge on provincial funds. But these institutions to be truly national must be clubs for promoting real Hindu-Muslim unity, they must be also nurseries for training Hindu boys and girls to regard untouchability as a blot upon Hinduism and a crime against humanity. There should be training schools for expert spinners and weavers. If the Congress retains its belief in the potency of the spinning wheel and khaddar, one has a right to expect these institutions to supply the science of the spinning wheel. There should be also factories for khaddar production. This is not to say that the boys and the girls are not to have any literary training. But I do maintain that the training of the hand and the heart must go hand-in-hand with that of the head. The quality and the usefulness of a national school or college will be measured not by the brilliance of the literary attainments of its scholars but by the strength of the national character, and deftness in handling the carding bow, the spinning wheel and the loom. Whilst I am most anxious that no national

school or college should be closed, I should not have the slightest hesitation in closing down a school or college, that is indifferent to the admission of non-Hindu boys or that shuts its door against the entry of untouchables or that has not carding and spinning as an indispensable part of the training. The time is past when we can be satisfied with the word 'national' on the sign-board of the school and the knowledge that it is not affiliated to any Government University or is not otherwise controlled by the Government. I must also not omit to point out that the tendency in many national institutions still is to neglect the Vernaculars and Hindustani. Many teachers have not realised the necessity of imparting instruction through the Vernaculars or Hindustani. I rejoice to observe that Sjt. Gangadhar Rao has arranged a meeting of national educationists to exchange experiences on the several points mentioned by me and to evolve, if possible, a general plan of education and action.

UNEMPLOYED NON-CO-OPERATORS

This is perhaps the proper place to mention those lawyers who have given up practice, and school masters and other Government employees who have given up Government service at the call of the nation. I know that there are many such men who find it hard to make the two ends meet. They deserve national support. The Khadi Board and the national schools and colleges are the two services that can take in almost an unlimited number of honest and industrious men who are willing to learn and labour and are satisfied with a modest allowance. I observe a tendency not to accept any remuneration for national service. The desire to serve without remuneration is praiseworthy, but all can not satisfy it. Every labourer is worthy of his hire. No country can produce thousands of unpaid wholetime workers. We must therefore develop an atmosphere in which a patriot would consider it an honour to serve the country and accept an allowance for such service.

INTOXICANTS

Another item of national importance is the liquor and the opium traffic. Had the wave of enthusiasm that swept across the country in 1921 in the cause of temperance remained non-violent, we would to-day have witnessed a progressive improvement. But unfortunately our picketting degenerated into violence, veiled when it was not open. Picketting had, therefore, to be abandoned and the liquor shops and opium-dens began to flourish as before. But you will be pleased to hear that the temperance work has not died out altogether. Many workers are still continuing their quiet and self-less service in the cause of temperance. We must, however, realise that we would not be able to eradicate the evil till we have Swaraj. It is no matter of pride to us that our children are being educated out of the revenue derived from this immoral source. I would almost forgive the Council-entry by Congressmen if they would boldly sweep out this revenue even though education may have to be starved. Nothing of the kind should happen if they will insist on a corresponding reduction in the military expenditure.

BENGAL REPRESSION

You will observe that in the foregoing paragraphs I have confined myself to the internal developments.

But the external circumstances, and among them chiefly the acts of our rulers, are affecting our destiny no less surely (though it may be adversely) than the internal developments. We may turn them to advantage if we will or we may succumb to them to our disadvantage. The latest act of the rulers is the repression commenced in Bengal. The All Parties' Conference condemned it in no uncertain terms. The Conference had hesitation in saying that the blow was aimed at the Bengal Swaraj Party. But I have none. I have been to Calcutta and had the opportunity of meeting men representing a variety of opinion and I came to the conclusion that the blow was aimed at the Swaraj Party. The opinion is confirmed by the speeches since delivered by Lords Lytton and Reading. The defence

they have offered is wholly unconvincing. Such a defence is possible only in a place like India where public opinion counts for little or nothing. Lord Lytton's conditions of release are an insult to our intelligence. Their Excellencies beg the question when they tell us that the situation warranted the Ordinance and the action under the Regulation of 1818. The national contention is :

1. That the situation they describe has not been proved to exist;

2. That assuming that the situation does exist, the remedy is worse than the disease ;

3. That the ordinary law contains enough powers for dealing with the situation ; and lastly

4. That even if extraordinary powers were necessary, they should have been taken from the legislature which is of their own creation.

The speeches of Their Excellencies evade these issues altogether. The nation which has had considerable experience of unsupported statements of the Government will not accept them as gospel truth. Their Excellencies know that we cannot and will not believe their statements not because they are wilfully untruthful, but because the sources of their information have often been discovered to be tainted. Their assurances are therefore a mockery of the people. The speeches are almost a challenge to us to do our worst. But we must not be irritated or be impatient. Repression, if it does not cow us down, if it does not deter us from our purpose, can but hasten the advent of Swaraj ; for it puts us on our mettle and evokes the spirit of self-sacrifice and courage in the face of danger. Repression does for a true man or a nation what fire does for gold. In 1921 we answered repression with Civil Disobedience and invited the Government to do its worst. But to-day we are obliged to eat the humble pie. We are not ready for Civil Disobedience. We can but prepare for it. Preparation for civil disobedience means discipline, self-restraint, a non-violent but resisting spirit, cohesion and above all scrupulous and willing obedience to

the known laws of God and such laws of man as are in furtherance of God's laws. But unfortunately we have neither discipline nor self-restraint enough for our purpose, we are either violent or our non-violence is unresisting, we have not enough cohesion and the laws that we obey, whether of God or man, we obey compulsorily. As between Hindus and Mussalmans we witness a daily defiant breach of laws both of God and man. This is no atmosphere for Civil Disobedience—the one matchless and invincible weapon at the disposal of the oppressed. The alternative is undoubtedly violence. We seem to have the atmosphere for it. Hindu-Muslim fights are our training for it. And those who believe that India's deliverance lies through violence are entitled to gloat over the free fights that take place between us. But I say to those who believe in the cult of violence: You are retarding India's progress. If you have any pity or friendly feeling for the starving millions, know that your violence will do them no service. Those whom you seek to depose are better armed and infinitely better organised than you are. You may not care for your own lives, but you dare not disregard those of your countrymen who have no desire to die a martyr's death. You know that this Government believes in Jallianwala Bagh massacres as a legitimate means of self-defence. Whatever may be true of other countries, there is no chance of the cult of violence flourishing in this country. India is admittedly the best repository and exponent of non-violence. Will you not better devote your lives if you sacrifice them in the cause of non-violence ?

I know, however, that my appeal to the violent revolutionaries will be just as fruitless as any such appeal to the violent and anarchical Government is likely to be.

We must therefore find the remedy and demonstrate to both, the violent Government and the violent revolutionaries that there is a force that is more effective than their violence.

REPRESSION : A SYMPTOM

I regard this repression as a chronic symptom of a chronic disease. The European dominance and Asiatic subjection is

the formula. Sometimes it is stated still more cryptically as White *vs.* Black. Kipling miscalled the white man's yoke as the 'white man's burden.' In the Malaya peninsula the colour bar that was thought to be temporary has now almost become a permanent institution. The Mauritius planter must get Indian labour without let or hindrance. The Kenya Europeans successfully lord it over Indians who have a prior right to be there. The Union of South Africa would to-day drive out every Indian if it safely could, in total disregard of past obligations. In all these cases the Government of India and the Imperial Government are not helpless ; they are unwilling or not so insistent as they ought to be on the protection of Indian settlers. The Government of India have not shown even the decency to publish the report of its own Commission on Fiji.

The attempt to crush the indomitable spirit of the Akalis is a symptom of the same disease. They have poured their blood like water for the sake of a cause they hold as dear as life itself. They may have erred. If they have, it is they who have bled in the process. They have hurt no one else. Nankana Saheb, Guruka-Bagh and Jaito will bear witness to their courage and their mute sufferings and martyrdom. But the Governor of the Punjab is reported to have vowed that he will crush the Akalis.

One hears that repression is crushing the Burmese spirit.

Egypt fares no better than we do. A mad Egyptian kills a British officer, certainly a detestable crime. The punishment is not only a detestable crime, but it is an outrage upon humanity. Egypt has nearly lost all it got. A whole nation has been mercilessly punished for the crime of one man. It may be that the murder had the sympathy of the Egyptians. Would that justify terrorism by a power well able to protect its interests without it ?

The repression in Bengal is therefore not an extraordinary thing. We must treat its periodic eruption in some shape or other, in some province or other, as our normal condition till we come to our own.

NEED FOR SANCTION

The Congress, therefore, to be worthy of its trust must devise a sanction to back its demands. Before we can forge the sanction, we, Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians, Sikhs, Parsis, etc., must unite and so should Swarajists, No-changers, Liberals, Home-Rulers, Muslim Leaguers and others. If we can but speak with a united voice and know our own mind it would be well. If we can develop the power to keep foreign cloth from our land, it would be better. We are ready then for the sanction.

MY FAITH

Let me state my faith. As a Congressman wishing to keep the Congress intact, I advise suspension of non-co-operation, for I see that the nation is not ready for it. But as an individual, I cannot, will not do so, as long as the Government remains what it is. It is not merely a policy with me, it is an article of faith. Non-Co-operation and Civil Disobedience are but different branches of the same tree called Satyagraha. It is my *Kalpadrum*—my *Jam-i-Jam*—the Universal Provider. Satyagraha is search for Truth ; and God is Truth. Ahimsa or Non-violence is the light that reveals that Truth to me. Swaraj for me is part of that Truth. This Satyagraha did not fail me in South Africa, Kheda, or Champaran and in a host of other cases I could mention. It excludes all violence or hate. Therefore, I cannot and will not hate Englishmen. Nor will I bear their yoke. I must fight unto death the unholy attempt to impose British methods and British institutions on India. But I combat the attempt with non-violence. I believe in the capacity of India to offer non-violent battle to the English rulers. The experiment has not failed. It has succeeded, but not to the extent we had hoped and desired. I do not despair. On the contrary I believe that India will come to her own in the near future, and that only through Satyagraha. The proposed suspension is part of the experiment. Non-Co-operation need never be resumed if the programme sketched by me can be fulfilled. Non-violent non-co-operation in some form

or other, whether through the Congress or without it, will be resumed if the programme fails. I have repeatedly stated that Satyagraha never fails and that one perfect Satyagrahi is enough to vindicate Truth. Let us all strive to be perfect Satyagrahis. The striving does not require any quality unattainable by the lowliest among us. For Satyagraha is an attribute of the spirit within. It is latent in every one of us. Like Swaraj, it is our birthright. Let us know it.

MRS. SAROJINI NAIDU *

FRIENDS,—I have asked the permission of this great gathering to address you in a language that is not ours because to-day I have been made the mouthpiece of a nation in struggle, the consolation of a nation in sorrow, the heart-beat of a nation in agony and the promise of a nation determined to win freedom at the uttermost sacrifice. You have before you in two national tongues and in one foreign language something of that unkindled fuel of my heart that I have piled up, awaiting your kindling hands to bring radiance to that dead wood. You having elected me at so grave an hour of the nation's history, have done something that throughout centuries may serve to redeem for one moment the shame and degradation of your fallen manhood, in giving to a mere woman, the woman who for years and years rocked the cradle and sung lullaby to that national standard which is the emblem of your own regeneration, you have gone back to the earliest inspiration that built your civilization and admitted the woman a co-sharer and comrade in the secular and spiritual evolution of a people. And though I be unworthy and have not in me one single quality that fits me for so great an honour—even I, weak and unworthy though I be, am of that spiritual descent that knows no mortality; I am of that descent that has for mothers the purity of Sita, the courage of Savitri and the faith of Damayanti and having this for ancestry, the meanest woman becomes consecrated, perhaps by tradition, to serve and to succour her land.

To-day we are gathered together under the shadow of a tragedy. During the last forty years in city

* Extempore speech.

after city of this great continent, the races of India have gathered together and sent messages of hope or mandates of battle to the world. To-day we are bowed down with tragedy. Hundreds of our young men are rotting in prison because they dared to love the country and for that crime there is no redress to-day in the law of the land. (*Shame, shame.*) There are sick prisoners—brave men the emblem of whose faith is the black turban—unreleased, though they saw peace has been made. And though the signatories of that peace have bravely surrendered themselves and accepted the terms, those who drew up the terms of that treaty did not realize or fulfil their obligations and the Sikh prisoners are still rotting in the northern jails. (*Cries of 'Shame, shame'.*)

Only the other day when the preparation for this great assembly was being made, how in a moment's caprice without reason —and no reason is forthcoming because there is no reason—workers in the United Provinces were arrested on a most monstrous charge—so monstrous indeed that it makes one ashamed to think that the bureaucracy is so bankrupt of its lies that it has stooped to something trivial and unworthy of Britain as that.

But more than that tragedy of the young and the brave in the prison, is our sorrow for the brave and dead, whose faces we shall never see again. Last year when my leader Mahatma Gandhi was presiding over the destinies of our people there was one by his side—there was one at his elbow—there was one in his counsel, there was one in his confidence, there was a comrade of his hope, there was a sharer in his struggle—and he is no more with us to day. He was called the friend of the poor—they called him Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das. In the land that produced Lord Sri Gouranga, was born that man who in his soul was a worthy incarnation of Chaitanya's love and whose whole life was a mystic rhapsody of sacrifice because to him to die for his country was more than the tragedy of things—and dying on the battle-field—dying of the victor's wound—he so loved his people, that soldier on his death-bed—lying on his bed of arrows—he stretched forth his

hand to the enemy and said: "Here even now make peace though I can carry the struggle to the utmost end of death. For the peace of my people, for the prosperity of my nation, I will make peace with you if you be men enough to make peace with me and mine."

And very soon after this king had passed away to the unseen kingdom of the next world, there died a patriot of the nation. Long before you and I were born, his voice was thundering against the heavens saying: "Liberty for my stricken people." He was one of those who founded this great Congress over which I have been called upon to preside to-day. And we miss not from our midst but from this world Sir Surendra Nath Banerjea and when we realize that he was one of the founders of this great national ideal of deliverance from bondage, we cannot fail to realize that Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das but confirmed and completed the dream that was a dream of the youth, Surendra Nath Banerjea.

But not politicians alone, not the soldiers on the battle-field alone, will win the liberty of India or raise our prestige in the eyes of the world. While Deshabandhu was fighting for liberty, while Sir Surendra Nath in his early days was dreaming of liberty, there was a man in Western India in the sanctuary of his academic seclusion, saying: 'Let the patriots fight for to-day. I will see that yesterday shines once more before the world ignorant of the beauty of yesterday,' and so Ramakrishna Bhandarkar lighted the long-extinguished lamp of Sanskrit learning and lifted it high above the tumult of the world and showed to the dazzled Europeans the secrets of our ancient Vedic civilization.

Others also have died, alas! To them also we offer our most mournful tribute. But let us remember the highest tribute, the loftiest memorial that we can offer to our illustrious dead, is to make our lives a more radiant remembrance of their dreams, their deeds, their hopes and aspirations and their failures and achievements also. How to-day shall we raise that memorial, how to-day shall the

living justify, how to-day shall the living vindicate and immortalize the dreams, the aspirations and sacrifices of the dead? Oh, my friends, to-day where shall I find the language, where shall I find that living fire that shall kindle in your hearts an undying fire of which Basanti Devi has spoken to you in her message? How shall I stir your hearts, how shall I light that flame that cannot die so that your slavery, so that your disunion, so that all the things that make you hungry and naked and forlorn, oppressed and battered, shall be burnt in that undying fire? We are to-day a people disorganized. We are to-day a people bowed down in the storm of reaction and hatred. Only the other day we were saying: 'Behold! Liberty is at hand.' Only the other day we said: 'Out of South Africa there came a wizard across the seas.' We said: 'Here comes the magician.' We said: 'Here comes the great sorcerer and by some magic he shall teach us deliverance from bondage' and throughout the length and breadth of this great sorrowing country went the magic fire—that was called "Non-Co-operation," "Non-Co-operation." The old saw visions. The young dreamed dreams; women saw their souls lit up like so many lamps extinguished. The young men said: "Let every drop of blood in me become a sacred sacrifice for the liberty of my people." The old said: "Oh God! give us youth again so that we may live to die for that ideal." And thousands went to prison. Thousands took the vow of poverty and the rich became poor and the poor became hungry and the hungry became corpses, but, we to-day, we are unable to sustain the might of that doctrine. We have not the courage, we have not the nobility, we have not the faith of our fathers to sustain the epic sacrifice. And so we are to-day in the grip of despair, we are to-day in the grip of hateful reaction which comes after a great epoch of life and sacrifice. How shall we rise out of that terrible despair? I said the other day only: "In the battle for liberty, fear is the one unforgivable sin." And to-day we are traitors because we are afraid, we are unpardonably sinful because we know despair. How shall I raise you out of

that despair? How should I bring together the scattered, demoralised, hostile and conflicting forces of the Indian people.

Oh my brothers! if to-day you are to realise that your brethren in South Africa are threatened with extermination because the rulers of that land say: "Who are you, slaves of India to-day who dare to interfere with the extermination of your slave kindred over here." Our brothers in South Africa have sent their ambassadors to us in their hour of agony. They have come to the last desperate stage when they cannot stand alone and they come to you with hands of supplication saying: "Oh, rise out of slavery because your slavery is the guarantee of our death in that country; your freedom is the prophecy of our honour in the eyes of the world." What answer shall you make to your Colonies? In East Africa, in Kenya, where our people have been living for centuries making historic Colonies of India—where sailors from Cambay showed to Vasco De Gama the way to India, the Eldorado, India the Eldorado, the dream of the world—there they say to your people: 'You shall not be anything but inferior because you belong to a slave nation called India.' In South Africa where your people by the sweat of their brow and blood of their lives have built up that beautiful Natal, they say to us: "You shall not trade here; you shall not live here; you are the Asiatic menace that we must cut off from our lives," and we, with all the tyranny of our social system, with all the curse of disunion, with all the dishonour of our bondage, have not the power of authority to say to them: "Thus far and no further, because the million-armed and free India stands before her stricken children in South Africa."

Friends, you have not the power to-day to resist a single wrong against you. Only a few weeks ago I went up to the Frontiers—to that old Peshawar where the people of Central Asia pour down. I went to the historic Khyber Pass and I saw the Khyber caravans out of Central Asia coming with hundreds of camels loaded with food and

spices and all those things that come to India for traffic; and standing on that ancient highway I realized how India has always known the Khyber guarding her own destiny—how even to-day history might repeat itself and how again that ancient Khyber might once more be the road of destiny to India, not the road of India's freedom, but once again the road of India's new slavery. And yet millions of men growing up, marrying and giving in marriage, building their homes, breeding children and amassing wealth—has any one of you the power to defend the honour of your homes, the sanctuary of your shrines? You unarmed, defenceless, as I have said, cowards by compulsion, have you to-day the right to be free when you dare not guard your frontiers of the mountains or your frontiers of the oceans against the enemy that might overcome you as through the centuries he has overcome you in the past? Shall you not say from this platform of the Congress, one of the first essentials of our regeneration is that military training and education that will make us a free people and enable us to guard our peace that nobody would dare to attack us in war? Shall you not form a National Militia that the old may take courage and the young be filled with enthusiasm and ecstasy? Will you not say that the highways of the oceans are open to your people— to your own ships and supplement your own defences on land? Will you not see to it that your commerce to-day is again in your own hands—you people, exploited by roads and by seas by White races, Yellow races and Brown races of the world? You talk of the wealth of India—exploited in every inch of you, every fibre of you— * * * * * * * * * —by the cupidity of the nations who for economic gain would suck your blood dry to-day—what are you doing to prevent the terror of exploitation against you? What are you, my people, going to do to become human again intellectually? To-day you are a mere imitation—cheap imitation—the fifth rate imitation of second rate models of the West. You have forgotten your own art. You have forgotten your own language. You do not know how to evolve your

own music. You have betrayed your own inheritance because you have run after false gods and your intellect has bowed down in worship to the gods that slave you and your imagination burns incense at the shrines of those that devour the honour of your race. What effort will you make to give to your children that right place in the world which is theirs? The Nations of the West say: "Oh, these slaves! We have nothing common." The Nations of America, of Africa, of Asia say: "What can we hope from that slave nation called India!"

Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das talked and dreamed of Asiatic Federation and yet when I think of the Asiatic Federation, I wonder if a slave nation dare to send a message to any free nation in either hemispheres of the world. But even slaves must have ties with the outer world and I would ask you to remember that India cannot remain in isolation but Indian nationalism can only be a unit of that great international development of the world—and slaves though we be to-day, without the right to send our message of hope to the outer world, at least let us try to create bonds of friendship with the outer world saying: "Our time is coming when we shall make good those pledges that we send you and in equal comradeship of effort and liberty help you fulfil the great ideal of the world brotherhood and world peace." But, friends, you cannot do this without those things that are necessary for the production of the great world ties and sense of kinship. You have no press to-day that can educate the outer world in the authentic affairs of the Indian nation. You have no ambassadors whom you can send to friendly countries saying: 'These are our ideals that we shall achieve'—saying: 'These are our miseries which we shall overcome,' and not saying to them: 'We ask your succour,' because no brave race could take succour from any other race of the world, but saying: 'These are the ambitions of the Indian people—these are the ideals of the Indian people, therefore oh, sympathetic and progressive people of the world, keep a place for us on that pilgrimage of yours towards the

fulfilment of the world's destiny.' And then my brothers and my sisters, Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis and Christians, Eurasians and Europeans, whoever be here, I want to say to you that the ideal of India can only be the great ideal of peace. The whole synthesis of the Indian genius is that all those gifts, that come to a weaker nation, that are now Indian, but came across the Khyber or came across the oceans whether to conquer—whether to live in the East—whether to trade—whether to be friends or whether as sanctuary or for succour—the synthesis of the Indian genius is built up of the civilization that every race has brought to this great hospitable land of ours. And to-day if we talk of freedom we can only do so in terms of that great composite ideal that builds up the Indian nation. And yet the world is shaking at the dreadful clamour of our internecine troubles. Whoever goes round this great country—instead of those lovely Bhajans that one should hear—those lovely songs—of peace and friendship—instead of those lovely lullabies sung to the little children—and yours is a land of beauty—yours is the land of peace—but instead of those lovely Bhajans and sweet lullabies, does he not hear the lullabies of children sung to the tune of hatred—does he not hear Bhajans singing the hymn of hate within the boundaries of the great India herself. To-day the hand of the Hindu is against his Muslim brother and the hand of the Muslim is raised against his Hindu comrade. And yet do you dare talk of Swaraj when you with your own hands are crumbling into dust all the dreams that ever were dreamt of a free and united India. This is not the moment, I know, to draw in too sharp an outline or in too living a colour that tragic picture of our disunion and feuds. And yet until we find some supreme solution for this greatest of ills that is eating like a canker into the very vitals of life, believe me, there can be no Swaraj for the Indian people. And what is the remedy for this dreadful disease? And what is it that has brought this disease so prominently to our eyes? What is the poison which is vitiating our very life-blood? What is the remedy, I ask?

Oh, my friends, do you think that Swaraj to-day is a thing that can be taken in piecemeal on communal lines or

racial lines or on lines of creed, caste or province? Is it not an organic thing—the very life-blood of our being that we cannot separate—that we cannot divide and yet keep, a living Swaraj? Why should the Hindus, the great majority, proud of their ancient civilization, forget that the basic glory of their culture has been the recognition of the beauty of all creeds and acceptance of all classes, giving them sanctuary, hospitality, succour, sympathy, unity, friendship and love offered in real generosity to all those who came to our doors. Is it not Hinduism to have apotheosis of tolerance and reverence for all good and for all the beauty of the world and shall the Hindus be so untrue to their inheritance that they shall to-day stand in isolation and say: 'Swaraj will be won on the strength of the Hindu people and let the Mussalmans stand aside'? That is to deny the fundamental principle, that great Vedic faith which belongs to you and to me as the imperishable heritage, that no foreign invasion has been able to corrupt or to defraud. But when, on the other hand, seven crores of Indian Moslems turn their faces beyond the frontiers of India and are also deeply preoccupied with the sorrows of Islam in other lands they forget that India their Mother is bleeding of her manifold wounds. What shall I say to my Moslem brothers—has not their Prophet taught them that paradise lies at the feet of the Mother and shall I not ask my Moslem brothers to turn their eyes and come back to the feet of the Mother in whose benediction lies their paradise? Shall not their recognition in its fullest measure of the Indian nationality be the greatest of gifts that Islam can give to India to crown the great gifts that came across the desert to my India? Shall not the Hindus and Moslems cease to talk of majority and minority—of safeguards and protection—of neutrality and hostility—and shall they not say: "India, our Motherland is the one bond of union, and though we the Mussalmans may belong to the desert called Arabia and though we the Hindus come of the forest culture of the Vedas, we are indissolubly bound together." Let the desert and the forest meet together in one paradise of culture whose name is Indian Liberty for the Indian Nation. Oh, my friends, how shall we solve

this problem, I do not know. Some say to me: Give us separate communal representation and all things will be well. Others say: Give us a joint electorate and all things will be well. Oh, is it so easy to treat the fatal disease with a few canting formulae of separate or joint representation or is there any magic in the number of seats given to one community or the other? If the remedy is so easy—a mere incantation of a number of seats or separate representation—some jugglery of the polling booth—I would say: Give it and be done with it. But the disease is very deep indeed and the name of that disease is 'distrust' and 'hatred' and it cannot be cured, believe me, until the women of the race say: "No more shall our little children be cradled to the lullaby of this hymn of internecine hate"—until the women of the race say—until the sisterhood and motherhood of India say: "We shall stop this dreadful disease that perpetuates our slavery and makes us the mockery of the civilized world;" and then and then only shall there be hope for this unhappy country. But that is not the end of our catalogue of sins.

To-day in this country you and I stand branded as the parasites of the city—we stand arraigned for our neglect and forgetfulness and for our betrayal of the needs of the poor. What shall a few thousand palaces in the city—what shall a few banks that hold your coffers and gold—what shall a few Universities here and a few Universities there and a few modern appliances to show how far you come in line with modern Western things—do to help the poor? Is this to be the criterion of your progress? No, no. Believe me, your progress, your liberty, your achievement will only be worth having when there is food in every home in the villages (*cries of 'Hear, hear'*)—when there is cloth enough to cover the shame of the naked women—when there is milk enough to moisten the lips of the suffering children who die of want in a land that is full of harvest. When Mahatma Gandhi gave to the world the wonderful

creed, he made the spinning wheel the centre of our great redemption. To-day, the poet Tagore, with his poet's vision and seer's vision has sent you a message to say : 'Direct your love and service to the cradle of your people where nature's milk has run dry—where joys are extinct and where life is on the wane.' What are you and I doing to still the hunger—those million mouths in hunger that cry for bread? What are you and I doing—with our intellect, with our powers, with our prestige—with our wealth and with our fame—to meet that myriad-handed supplicant gesture that says: "Oh, save us from death for the pangs of hunger are terrible within our vitals." Shall you not, young men, come out in your hundreds and thousands as missionaries of salvation to go over the length and breadth of this agricultural country—this agricultural country whose harvests are transhipped to feed millions of little children elsewhere when the mouths of your own little children are smitten by your hands unto death? Shall you not use your intellect—shall you not use your talent—shall you not use the plenty that you amass in the city to go back to the poor who have fed you? They have tilled the soil that you may reap the harvest. They rot in poverty so that you may benefit. But you have condemned them to be living corpses in the midst of harvest. You have enjoyed, you have slept, you have married, you have lived and been famous and powerful, while those who are your *Annadata*—those on whom you live, they are dying to-day in their hunger and misery. From them comes the cry of anguish saying : "We are dying—our little children are dying—we are naked—our women are naked—send us clothes, send us food, send us money, send us men." How shall you men, go and work amidst the villagers unless you are true to the old tradition that makes the household feed the missionaries, the Sanyasis, the Bairagis of your race. Unless you do your duty and set them free from all material care, those missionaries who shall go forth and redeem the villagers from hunger, from poverty, from disease, from misery, from death—how shall they be able

to give their lives for the cause? And remember, friends, because there is not enough food in the villages in this great agricultural country, men crowd into cities—are herded together like animals—work for a pittance—starve, exposed to temptations and viles—become nothing but the churning house of every disease that comes. These men are exposed without any sheet-anchor to temptation they cannot resist. Is it not your duty to so organize the labour in the city—the labour in the great industrial towns—so that your work in the villages—your beneficent work that will set free the villagers—shall be complemented and completed by the work you do for the industrial workers in the crowded cities? Do you not know how they are exploited so that the coffers of the profiteers might be swelled, and do you not also know how many of you who seek after fame—how many of you who seek power or prestige or political gain—exploit these men, their poverty, their honesty, the misery they suffer from. But let it not be said of us as a nation that we have brought the tactics of the West into the East, rather let us revive our own ideals, and in serving labour let us not make a new class war in this country where there are already too many castes and creeds. Let us therefore discipline labour and discipline the capitalist as well. Let us teach both of them that they are equal partners in the service of India so that the industrial development of India—the commercial development of India—shall not be the work of labour only or of the capitalists only, but the result of their equitable and fruitful co-operation—each working with the other in the service of the land.

Friends, I do not know, because I have not the knowledge—I have not the qualification—how to deal with all the other problems that face us. But whatever constitution you wish to evolve out of our knowledge or experience of India—whether it be some day absolute independence—whether it be as Deshabandhu used to say, freedom through interdependence with other free nations—whether it should be in the initial stage self-

Government on the lines of that constitution which has been evolved by one of your ex-Presidents—that great, Irish woman who has made for herself an Indian soul and whose name is Annie Besant—or whether it should be evolved as a temporary measure—mark you, as a temporary measure, out of that demand which is the minimum demand—of rights to be given at once—that was put forward in the Indian Legislative Assembly by the chosen representatives of the Indian people—whatever form your initial constitution may take, remember that one-third of India belongs to the great Indian Chiefs and one of your initial duties is to evolve some policy of friendship, without interference, with the Indian States and Native Chiefs of India so that they on their part might come in line with the great ideal of—I do not know—of what is now called British India. And let not the Princes believe for a moment that we want to crush them by any subtlety or device, hidden or covert * * *
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and let them feel that some day when we have the great Federation of free India, the Indian States will come in line with it as an integral unit of greater India working on the same basis of democratic Freedom with the people of India. And side by side with the Indian States I place the Frontier Provinces of India. They are always ruled by martial law. You cry out against the martial law in the Punjab—you cry out against the martial law in Malabar—but what about those people—Hindus and Mahomedans, Afridis, Usufees and Afghans—living always under the shadow of martial law and being denied even the ordinary amenities of life. The ordinary redress of law is not granted to them. When I was in the Frontier Provinces, friend after friend told me: "Will not the Congress and the people of India do something to help us to get the ordinary normal amenities of life?" But as I said already, the Congress should take all these interests as mere auxiliary work, and I have suggested in that little pamphlet that the Congress should be divided into departments of activities and each department should be worked by men or women who have enthusiasm and capacity and experience

to minister to all the growing and divergent needs of the people. One of these departments should deal with village reconstruction with a band of eager, self-less missionaries of whom I have spoken ; the other with the fortune or misfortune of our people overseas and yet another with foreign propaganda and publicity in India, so that there will remain not one single village or hamlet in India whose people shall not be educated in their civic rights and social rights and duties and their political rights, so that our people shall know how wrong a system it is that governs them with an iniquitous fiscal policy that ruins their trade and deprives them of their rightful place in the economic and industrial progress of the world.

But when all is said and done, remember the work of the Congress is the attainment of Swarajya. The Congress after five years has to-day returned to its great political duty as the one channel through which Swarajya must be attained. How shall we work for this. You all know that the Congress is divided to-day. Though united, it has two wings. One wing is presided over by Mahatma Gandhi—that group of Congressmen, I believe the influential group who refused to change with the changing time and who say: "We shall seek Swarajya through Mahatma Gandhi's gospel alone." And so to-day within the Congress itself the only political group actually battling with the bureaucratic tyranny is the Swarajya Party which had for its leader the brilliant Deshabandhu and which has to-day for its leader that man who chose poverty having once been a prince of men—Motilal Nehru. How shall a single party give battle to the powerful bureaucracy ? To-day is it not the duty of the Liberals, the Conventionalists or Independents—no matter what particular label they attach to their names—no matter what be their shibboleths—to return to the Congress—shall they not come to the common field of battle and united and firm say to the Bureaucracy: "We shall not serve you any longer, we shall not any longer suffer the insults and insolence of the bureaucracy's challenge to our manhood." Shall they not stand together and say whether within the Councils or without: "We

stand to fight for our rights and we shall not be deprived of our rights an hour longer and we must have our rights which belong to us." There is a demand which is called the National Demand which was given as an ultimatum to the Government. What is the will of the people—what is the mandate to your representatives in the Legislative Assembly—are you prepared to still have the devastating passion that disintegrates your manhood—are you prepared to say: 'Let us wait a little longer—when so many centuries have gone into slumber with this brand of slavery, let a century still go by, let us still be patient?' Oh, if I could destroy that patience of yours—if I could break that devastating patience of yours! Oh, if I could redeem India from her horrible patience! Say to your chosen representatives: 'Our patience is at an end—we cannot wait. Come out of that Assembly and Council of yours if within a week the answer does not come that shall guarantee your Swaraj.' Say to them: 'We will not wait that you should go there and make the Assembly a debating ground for eloquence and rhetoric.' Say to them: 'Come out and work and redeem the country by your work. We have had enough of it. We have had enough of constitutional requests denied by constitutional Imperialists.' To-day we want you to go to the country and say: 'Oh, men and women of India, we tried and we have failed to shake the mighty, we come back to the poor, we come back to the hungry, the homeless, the oppressed and ask for their mandate for our sacrifice.' Do you think by mere promise from White Hall or Simla or Delhi the poor would be fed, the naked clothed and shame wiped out from the forehead of your manhood? In your millions you must stand together and march shoulder to shoulder through stage after stage of sacrifice till the last sacrifice is demanded of you.

I am not afraid of the ultimate sacrifice. I am only a woman. I am only a woman but I am the standard bearer of your honour and I will see to it—the women of India will see to it—that you men shall no more betray the heritage of our nation. The Indian woman calls: 'Oh, my

men, stand up and say what is manhood but sacrifice, what is life except to die that our children may be reborn in their heritage of freedom.' And if men falter, as they have done through centuries, go to your homes and let me, a mere woman—let me go to the world and say: 'Mother, rise, we redeem you from bondage, rise from the nightmare of slavery. Shall it be left to the women to say that thy sons were faithless but thy daughters have saved thee.' *Bande Mataram.* (*Applause and prolonged cheers.*)

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

The following is the Presidential Address, copies of which were printed and circulated :

Friends,—Were I to ransack all the treasuries of human language I fear I should fail to discover words of adequate power or beauty to translate my deep and complex emotion in acknowledging the signal honour you have done me, by entrusting to my unskilled hands the high burden and responsibility of so exalted an office, which for two score years has been ennobled by the brilliant and memorable achievements of my distinguished predecessors both of our own and of alien race. I am fully aware that you have bestowed upon me the richest gift in your possession, not merely as gracious recompense for such trivial service as I may have been privileged to render at home or abroad ; but rather in generous tribute to Indian womanhood and as token of your loyal recognition of its legitimate place in the secular and spiritual counsels of the nation. In electing me to be the chief among your chosen servants, through a period so fraught with grave issues and fateful decisions, you have not created a novel precedent. You have only reverted to an old tradition and restored to Indian woman the classic position she once held in a happier epoch of our country's story ; symbol and guardian alike of the hearth-fires, the altar-fires and the beacon-fires of her land. Poignantly conscious as I am of my own utter unworthiness to interpret so exquisite, so austere an ideal of wisdom, devotion and sacrifice, as embodied through the ages in the radiant heroines of our history and legend, I trust, that to the fulfilment of the lofty task you have allotted me, even I might bring some glowing ember of the immortal faith that illumined the vigil of Sita in her forest exile, and bore the feet of Savitri undaunted to the very citadels of Death.

The accepted convention of this august assembly imposes upon me, alas, the duty of placing before you a

formal document of plans and policies of work for the coming year. I therefore, contrary to the impulse and custom of a life-time, am vainly groping for appropriate phrases that might serve dimly to foreshadow some of the thoughts that can only find spontaneous expression when I stand in your midst and the inspiration of your living presence shall give to my heart its voice of hope, and to my words their wings of fire.

Before we reach the central purpose of our labours in this northern city, to which we have journeyed from the farthest ends of India, let us offer our mournful homage to the memory of our illustrious dead—to that great patriarch of our national renaissance, Surendranath Banerjea, who for well-nigh half a century assailed the heavens with the thunders of his splendid oratory in indignation at the burning wrongs of his people; to Ramakrishna Bhandarkar, the famous scholar of the Deccan, who with patient and dedicated hands rekindled the lamp of our ancient Sanskrit culture, and lifted it high above the clamour and conflict of political throngs, to Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das, kingliest of dreamers, whose whole being was a Vaishnavite rhapsody of incomparable passion for the liberty of his Motherland, who died with his hand outstretched in a royal gesture of reconciliation towards a powerful antagonist against whom he had fought so often with such reckless and victorious chivalry.

Would that he were with us to-day to guide us aright in our anxious deliberations and help us to apprehend the true and tragic significance of the stupendous problems that call for immediate settlement and cannot with impunity be deferred to a more convenient season! A singular combination of domestic and international circumstances has conspired to implicate us against our will and almost without our knowledge in a labyrinth of intricate and unparalleled difficulties that threaten the stability and integrity of our national existence. Our imperative duty, therefore, is to survey with eyes unhooded by their habitual illusion, the sinister and melancholy spectacle of our abject helplessness born of our foolish disunion and

nourished by our long dependence upon the caprice or the compassion of Imperial policies. What means shall we devise, what schemes shall we evolve to deliver ourselves from the manifold dangers that encompass us? How shall we combat the deadly forces of repression that challenge our human rights of liberty, how defeat the further encroachment of ruthless and rapacious Imperialist exploitation that despoils the remnants of our moral and material heritage? How circumvent the insidious and ingenious aggression of other foreign races eager to profit by the conditions of our economic and intellectual servitude? How shall we avert the implacable doom that menaces our unfortunate kindred in the Colonies, how quell the rampant forces of reaction or divert the disaster of our internecine feuds?

The answers that we need are fully enshrined in the magnificent Gospel of sacrifice enunciated by Mahatma Gandhi, in which he vainly strove to teach us the heroic secret of national self-redemption. But we, so long disinherited from the epic faith that sustained our brave forefathers, were too weak and unworthy to respond for more than a brief period to the demands of that noble and exacting creed. Whatever may be the verdict of history, it cannot be gainsaid that the movement of non-violent non-co-operation that swept like a tempest over the country shook the very foundations of our national life, and though to-day it is quiescent and its echoes are almost still, it has irrevocably changed the aspect of our spiritual landscape.

However remote may be all our programmes for the future from the principles and ideals of Mahatma Gandhi, they must inevitably be permeated by the influence of these recent years which have permanently shifted the currents of our political thoughts and altered the direction of our political destiny.

We need to-day some transcendent miracle of intrepid and enduring statesmanship to enable us to remobilize, reconcile and discipline our scattered and demoralised energies to a supreme unanimous effort for the final

deliverance of India from the last shackles of her political subjection ; and to devise a comprehensive scheme that shall act as a natural and indispensable auxiliary of political emancipation, and include within the scope of its interest or benediction all the enterprises and endeavours that substantially contribute to the social, economic, industrial and intellectual advancement of India, consistently with the requirements of her own peculiar conditions and in accordance with the finest ideals of modern progress.

To give concrete expression to our decision in regard to these ancillary activities, the Indian National Congress should create definite departments to be governed by groups of men and women specially qualified by their capacity or enthusiasm to administer to the vital and divergent wants of the people. The main divisions might be few but should include within their sphere of responsibility all cognate matters. To my mind it is of paramount importance to formulate a practical scheme of village reconstruction on the lines of Deshabandhu Das's dream. For this purpose we must try to enlist a large band of missionary patriots of burning zeal who set free from material wants by the pious charity of the householders of the country as in ancient times, should carry through the length and breadth of the land the beneficent evangel of self-reliance and self-respect, taking the immemorial twin symbols of the plough and the spinning wheel as the central text of the teaching that shall liberate our unhappy peasantry from the crushing misery and terror of hunger, ignorance and disease. Closely allied to the task of village reorganisation, is the task of organising the industrial workers in the crowded cities, who are so often compelled to live under conditions that degrade and brutalize them ; and who, dislocated from the steadying influences of the familiar traditions and associations of the rural homes they leave in search of bread, are so hopelessly exposed to the temptations of immorality and vice. It should be our endeavour to assist in securing for them improved housing conditions, better wages and a cleaner atmosphere, and to establish an equitable and harmonious co-operation between

Capital and Labour as a valuable joint asset of national progress.

I am appalled at the criminal apathy of our general attitude towards the urgent problem of Indian education. The surpassing evil of foreign domination has been to enslave our imagination and intellect and alienate us from the glorious tradition of our national learning. We are to-day no more than the futile puppets of an artificial and imitative system of education which, entirely unsuited to the special trend of our racial genius, has robbed us of our proper mental values and perspectives, and deprived us of all true initiative and originality in seeking authentic modes of self-expression. It is pre-eminently our duty towards the young generation to so recreate our educational ideals as to combine in felicitous and fruitful alliance all the lovely regenerating wisdom of our Eastern culture with all the highest knowledge of art and science, philosophy and civic organisation evolved by the younger people of the West.

In addition, I would insist with all the force at my command on including a complete course of military training as an integral part of national education. Is it not the saddest of all shameful ironies that our children whose favourite lullabies are the battle songs of Kurukshetra and whose little feet march gaily to the stirring music of Rajput ballads, should be condemned to depend for the safety of their homes, the protection of their sanctuaries, the security of their mountain and ocean frontiers, on the fidelity and strength of foreign arms? The savage Massai, the primitive Zulu, the Arab and the Afridi, the Greek and the Bulgar may all carry their tribal weapons and claim their inalienable right to defend the honour of their race, but we whose boast it is that we kindled the flame of the world's civilization are alone defrauded of our privilege and have become cowards by compulsion, unfit to answer the world's challenge to our manhood, unable to maintain the sanctity of our homes and shrines.

Whatever the experiments recommended by the Commission now sitting to explore the avenue of the military advancement for our people, it is incumbent upon the Congress to form forthwith a national militia by voluntary conscription, of which the nucleus might well be the existing volunteer organisations. Further we should also carefully consider the question of nautical as well as naval and aerial training to equip the nation for all purposes of defence against invasion or attack.

Let it not be said of us, however, that our selfish absorption in our own domestic affairs has made us oblivious of the distress and difficulty of our kinsmen in foreign lands. Our adventurous compatriots, who have crossed the seas to seek their livelihood in the dominions and colonies have from time to time been subjected to restrictive and repressive legislation. The White Paper still stands as a reproach against our failure to redress the wrongs of the Indian community in Kenya. But in the whole chronicle of civilized legislation there has never been so cruel and relentless an outrage against humanity as is deliberately embodied in the anti-Asiatic Bill, which is calculated to exterminate the Indian community from South Africa.

Shall we not send across the seas a loving and ready response to their heart-rending cry for succour, and, through their ambassadors whom we welcome to-day, offer to our harassed and afflicted brothers in South Africa the assurance that India stands behind their courageous struggle to vindicate their inherent civic and human rights against the onslaught of such terrific injustice and oppression?

Never before has our duty to our kindred in foreign countries been so vividly brought home to our minds; nor the necessity of establishing a close and living contact with all their changing fortunes. We should not lose a single moment in forming an Overseas Department in the Congress manned by those who can keep themselves vigilantly aware of all the legislations and enactments that adversely or otherwise affect Indian settlers abroad.

Here my heart pleads with me to remember those sorrowful and lonely exiles, pining in strange and far off corners of the earth, consumed with a desperate hunger and nostalgia for a glimpse of their Motherland, to which they cannot return because, once they sought to serve her and win her freedom in ways unrecognised by the common law. But many amongst them surely have made fullest atonement for all the fervent folly of their too impatient youth. Surely they, who have been chastened in the searching crucibles of dreadful suffering and privation, have been refashioned to become consecrated vessels of selfless service for the amelioration of the poor, the fallen and the depressed.

I cannot conceive how we have allowed ourselves to be so heavily handicapped by the lack of an efficient publicity which is the first essential of any campaign. We should therefore take immediate steps to form a department for widespread political propaganda and for the education of the masses in all matters pertaining to their civic and social interests, to the wrongs under which they labour, the struggles in which the nation is engaged, the iniquitous and unstable fiscal and financial policies so ruinous to the prosperity of the country. I am confident that we could secure the willing co-operation of those who, otherwise prevented from active participation in public affairs, would gladly place their expert knowledge at our disposal, to advise us on questions connected with the revival of cottage industries, on commerce, railway, shipping, co-operative banking and all other branches of development necessary for our material welfare.

The nationalist press both Vernacular and English, should be amongst the accredited channels of our propaganda ; above all a reliable foreign news service should be established to transmit to all the chief centres of the world the correct version of Indian affairs, and friendly embassies appointed to foster feelings of goodwill and understanding between India and the people of other lands.

And now I approach with the utmost hesitation and regret, the most baffling and most tragic of all the problems

before us. I, who have dedicated my life to the dream of Hindu-Muslim unity, cannot contemplate without tears of blood the dissensions and divisions between us that rend the very fabric of my hope. I have tried to arrive at a just appreciation of the many unfortunate causes that have brought about so deep a gulf between the two communities, and tended to quicken such a sharp and importunate sense of aloofness on the part of my Muslim brothers, which, to the profound alarm and resentment of the Hindu community, manifests itself in a growing and insistent demand for separate and preferential rights and privileges in academic, official, civic and political circles of life. Though I am convinced that the principle of communal representation, whether through a joint or a separate electorate, frustrates the conception of national solidarity, I am compelled to recognise that situated as we are to-day, in an atmosphere so tense and dark and bitter with unreasoning communal jealousy, suspicion, fear, distrust and hatred, it is not possible to reach any satisfactory or abiding readjustment without the most earnest and patient collaboration between Hindu and Muslim statesmen of undeniable patriotism, to whom we should entrust the delicate and difficult task of seeking some sovereign remedy for so devastating a disease.

I beseech my Hindu brothers to rise to the height of their traditional tolerance which is the basic glory of our Vedic faith and try to comprehend how intense and far-reaching a reality is the brotherhood of Islam, which constrains seventy millions of Indian Mussalmans to share with breathless misery the misfortunes that are so swiftly overtaking the Islamic countries and crushing them under the heel of the military despotism of foreign powers.

In their turn I would implore my Muslim comrades not to permit their preoccupation with the sorrows of Syria, Egypt, Iraq and Arabia to obliterate the consciousness of their supreme duty to India their motherland, who must always have the first claim upon their devotion and allegiance.

If Hindus and Mussalmans would both learn to practise the divine qualities of mutual forbearance and

accord to one another perfect liberty of worship and modes of living, without the tyranny of fanatical interruptions of one another's appointed rituals and sacrifices, if they would but learn to reverence the beauty of each other's creeds and the splendour of each other's civilizations, if the women of the two communities would but join together in the intimate friendship of their common sisterhood, and nurture their children in an atmosphere of mutual sweetness and harmony, how near we should come to the fulfilment of our heart's desire!

We should grossly fail in our duty to our neighbours were we to omit to try and foster cordial ties of sympathy and trust between ourselves and the princes and the people of the great Indian States, scrupulously refraining from all interference in their internal concerns but always ready to serve in their wider interests.

Nor can we afford to ignore the claims of the frontier provinces which, owing to their peculiar geographical and strategic position on the map, are governed by a form of perpetual martial law. We should render them all the assistance in our power, in their efforts to obtain the normal civic and social amenities which are so abundantly enjoyed by their sister provinces.

These are some of the accessory features of our work. The real function, however, of the Indian National Congress is the speedy attainment of Swaraj.

There is a large and influential section of Congressmen who still cling with touching and jealous loyalty to the orthodox creed of Non-Co-operation. Sternly refusing to take cognizance of legislative bodies they devote themselves to the pursuit of Mahatma Gandhi's benevolent mission, propagating the cult of the spinning wheel and ministering to the lowly and pitiful outcastes of our society whom, in our arrogance, we have so long deprived of their elementary human rights.

To-day therefore, the Swaraj Party with its highly disciplined organisation and its striking record of success is

the only political body within the Congress engaged in actual combat with bureaucratic authority. Is it not in this crucial hour the unmistakable duty of all the other political parties in the country, irrespective of their particular labels and particular beliefs, to return to the Congress which invites them with open doors, and coalesce all their divided energies and talents in devising a common programme of action in pursuance of a common goal?

All of them have openly acknowledged that the Reforms of 1919 which were to have created a new era of progress have proved nothing but a mirage and the powers they professed to transfer to the people nothing but a deceptive myth. All of them surely, are tacitly agreed upon some common maximum of the wrongs they are still prepared to endure, some common minimum of the rights they are now determined to enforce. And whatever be my own personal conviction, they at all events are all in favour at least as an initial form of self-government of the ideal of Dominion Status, so elaborately expounded in the Commonwealth of India Bill, and more succinctly and emphatically embodied in the National Demand which has been endorsed by the representatives of all political schools in the Legislative Assembly. Below the limits of that demand the Indian nation cannot descend without irretrievable damage to its dignity and self-respect. It is now for the Government to make the responsive gesture that shall decide our future attitude. If the response be sincere and magnanimous, with ample guarantees of goodwill and good faith on its part, it will necessitate an immediate revision of our present policy. But if by the end of the Spring Sessions we receive no answer or an answer that evades the real issues or proves unworthy of our acceptance, the National Congress must clearly issue a mandate to all those who come within its sphere to vacate their seats in the Central and Provincial Legislatures and inaugurate from Kailas to Kanyakumari, from the Indus to the Brahmaputra, an untiring and dynamic campaign to arouse, consolidate, educate and prepare the Indian people for all the progressive and ultimate stages of our united struggle

and teach them that no sacrifice is too heavy, no suffering too great, no martyrdom too terrible, that enables us to redeem our Mother from the unspeakable dishonour of her bondage, and bequeath to our children an imperishable legacy of Peace.

In the battle for liberty, fear is the one unforgivable treachery and despair, the one unforgivable sin.

With palms uplifted in ardent supplication, I pray that, to us, in our coming hour of travail, may be granted in sufficient measure an invincible faith and an inflexible courage, and that He in whose name we begin our labours to-day will in the hour of our triumph keep us humble and in the beautiful words of our ancient invocation

> Lead us out of the Unreal into the Real,
> Out of the Darkness into the Light,
> Out of Death into Immortality.

Forty-first Congress—Gauhati—1926

Mr. S. SRINIVASA AIYENGAR

FRIENDS,—I am profoundly grateful for the signal honour that unredeemed India has conferred on me. I have accepted the responsibilities of this great office made more formidable to me by the lustre of great names, at a time, as Mahatma Gandhi put it, "of unexampled difficulty" only in the belief that it was a compliment to South India and that, in the discharge of my task, I shall have your full support and co-operation.

THE NATIONAL DEMAND AND ITS SEQUEL

The foremost of our duties for the coming year is to mobilise all our forces on the issue of the National Demand. It was formulated in February, 1924, in the Legislative Assembly by Pandit Motilal Nehru on behalf of the Nationalist Party consisting of the Swarajists and the Independents. It asked the Government to take steps to have the Government of India Act revised with a view to establish full Responsible Government in India and for that purpose to summon at an early date a representative Round Table Conference to recommend the scheme of a Constitution for India with due regard to the protection of the rights and interests of important minorities; and to place the scheme for approval before a newly elected Indian Legislature after dissolving the Central Legislature and finally submit the same to the British Parliament to be embodied in a statute. That resolution was passed by a majority of 76 to 48 against the Government; and though the Swarajya Party began their work in the Assembly with a gesture of honourable

co-operation the Government arrogantly brushed it aside. But in order to side-track the principal issue, they appointed the Reforms Inquiry Committee to investigate the feasibility and desirability of securing remedies for the difficulties and defects connected with the working of the Government of India Act but consistently with the policy, structure and purpose of the Act. The evidence that was given before the Committee by those who worked the reforms devotedly as well as the report of the minority established clearly that the system of Dyarchy, both as a step towards responsible government and otherwise, was an egregious failure. The attempt of the Government of India to induce the Assembly to accept the recommendations contained in the Majority Report of the Reforms Inquiry Committee was met by a reiteration of the national demand in the Assembly in September, 1925, in an amplified form. This time also the Assembly by a majority of 72 to 45 passed the resolution, Swarajists and Independents acting together. It was a second time rejected by the Government.

In December, 1925, the Congress held at Cawnpore ratified on behalf of the country the terms of the settlement offered by the Independent and Swarajya Parties by the resolution on the national demand. To enforce that demand in case it was rejected and to carry on the fight for Swarajya, the Congress adopted a programme of work both in the country and in the Councils and provided for the education of the electorates in its policy and the capture by Congressmen, under specific pledges, of the elected seats in the several legislatures.

In March, 1926, on the refusal of the Government to accede to the demand, the Swarajya Party walked out of the Assembly and the Provincial Councils in accordance with the Congres mandate. The leader of the Party in the Assembly said on that occasion: "We hope and trust that the nation will give a suitable reply to the truculent rejection of our demands and send us again in larger numbers with a stronger mandate and, God willing, with

the sanction for fulfilling its aspirations and enforcing its commands."

THE GENERAL ELECTIONS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

The results of the campaign thus opened and of the general elections that followed and are just now over, have justified the policy of the Swarajya Party in the Assembly and the Provincial Legislative Councils and have abundantly proved the wisdom of the great experiment inaugurated by the Congress at its Cawnpore Session. Throughout the country, thanks to the Congress electoral campaign, there has been a tremendous amount of political education and the vehemence, the extent and the concentrated fire of the opposition, communal or other, have only served to demonstrate the utter soundness of the programme and policy of the Congress, and the stronghold it has over the people.

The provinces of Madras, Bergal, Bihar and Orissa, in a striking degree, and the other provinces including the Punjab, to a lesser extent, have responded to the Congress mandates and come under the Congress discipline. If in some provinces our success has not been as great as in others, it is due solely to the fact that Congressmen there were divided amongst themselves and was not due to the superiority in the programme or policy of any definite political party. Having regard to the fact that it is the first time that the Congress has run the elections on an all-India scale and that there were serious differences amongst Congress leaders and workers, the successes achieved under the Cawnpore mandate all over India are, both in quantity and in quality, most remarkable. Though they have not been a surprise to most of us, they have come as a shock to the bureaucracy and its allies in every province. Nor can we forget that most of those who succeeded against the Congress candidates, though they had not subscribed to Congress pledges, succeeded still as Congressmen. On the whole he who runs may read the lesson of the elections that the centre of political gravity

has decisively and definitely shifted from the bureaucracy and its Indian supporters to the National Congress.

The real meaning of our success at the general elections, the success of those that obeyed the Cawnpore mandate, cannot be easily missed. It constitutes an unmistakable endorsement of the national demand and of the policy of walk-out that marked its rejection by the Government. It also signalises the enthronement of a sound and robust nationalism in place of communalism as a dominant political factor. In Madras, Brahmin-non-Brahmin differences have ceased to be the great prop of the foreign bureaucracy that they have been till now. And it is a matter for gratification that in Tamil Nadu and in Bihar, Muslims have joined the Congress Party and been successful in the elections. Above all, the country has given its unequivocal verdict against the system of Dyarchy and the rest of the political apparatus established by the Reform Act. For, we must remember that Congress members form the largest single party in almost every Legislative Council, though in some provinces they are much more numerous than in others. And they went to the polls on a clear pledge of non-acceptance of the office of Minister till a satisfactory response was made by the Government to the national demand. Nor can we overlook that the elections with all the difficulties that we had to face have been a severe test of our capacity for Swaraj, and have given us patience, skill, a quiet confidence, a nation-wide organization, party loyalty and a thoroughly democratic outlook.

WE ARE ASKED TO WORK DYARCHY

We have by now largely cleared the decks for action and must therefore concentrate our attention next on enforcing compliance with the national demand. We shall for the present keep the door open for a just and honourable settlement. But we must not deceive ourselves into the belief that the Governments in England and in India are now willing to concede our demand or even to open negotiations with us for the purpose. They will

be, as they have always been, prodigal of words that mean nothing and will deploy against us all the arts of a trained and evasive diplomacy. The only answer, we have so far had from Government, in every variety of accent and phrase, is, that we should "lay aside for the time being our demand for Swaraj and should soberly and whole-heartedly work the present constitution." It is conveniently ignored that the new constitution was worked by various groups of moderate or progressive politicians "soberly and whole-heartedly" during the period of the first Councils. The boycott of the Councils by the Congress, far from obstructing the path of the Reform Act, enabled men who had confidence in the Government and in whom the Government had confidence to co-operate unreservedly and to work the Act. Then again, in the period of the second councils after the Act, in many provinces and notably in Madras and Bombay, groups of politicians worked the constitution exactly in the way in which they were required to do. How can it be said that the constitution has not been given a fair chance or has not been worked for 6 years by Indians pledged to co-operate "soberly and whole-heartedly" with the Government? Even the opposition by the Swarajists, during the term of the second councils, was in strictness only a parliamentary opposition, except in Bengal and the Central Provinces. Whether the constitution was worked by Congressmen or by moderate groups, should make no difference to the Government. What the Government therefore requires really of us is that the Congress should give up its demand for Swaraj and merge itself in the bureaucracy.

Shall we still think it wisdom to harbour the wish that is father to the thought or to discover proofs of a changed heart in ingenious hints dropped by press correspondents or in the impressions of those that are in touch with high officials or with past or present members of Parliament who are more able to advise us than to bring round British opinion and parties to our view? The least therefore that we must insist upon is a businesslike statement in public,

precise and concrete, and satisfactory in content and tone, by the Government in India or in England. Meanwhile, we must follow up the victories we have gained by consolidating all our forces and by steadily increasing the pressure of the councils and of the country upon the Government. We must pool all our resources together and make a firm stand against a non-co-operating bureaucracy and wrest Swaraj from their unwilling hands. I trust the lapse of 6 years has not made us either forget the wholly illusory character of the Reforms or develop a new tenderness towards them. Our experience has, if anything, abundantly shown that the reforms have not given the people's representatives any real power and can lead neither to self-government nor to good government. A brief and dispassionate examination of the salient features of the Reform Act should convince us that we would be stultifying ourselves if we developed a new faith in it.

IS DYARCHY WORKABLE?

That Dyarchy is neither a helpful stage in the progressive realisation of Responsible Government nor serves as apt machinery for grinding down good Government, has been the unanimous verdict of experience and is now practically admitted on all hands. Lord Birkenhead himself has referred to it more than once in apologetic terms though he insists upon our working it. Its true purpose is not merely to provide for the administration of certain subjects by the Governor and his Executive Council, but to attenuate the power of the Ministers and the control of the Legislature over the transferred subjects. Under this grotesque system, the Ministers are always under official tutelage and domination so that they cannot breathe the oxygen of freedom. The joint deliberation between Ministers and Members of Council for which Lord Willingdon took credit proved to be in the interests of the reserved half. Even without it, most matters relating to transferred subjects require to be considered by those in charge of the reserved departments and to that extent are shaped by the opinion of that half of the Government. This was fully established by the

evidence before the Reforms Inquiry Committee. The fact that members of the Civil Service are themselves Members of Government makes the Ministers helpless in their relation to the members of the Civil Service. Again, the rules relating to financial restrictions and the control exercised by the Finance Member as one in charge of a reserved subject over important aspects of transferred subjects, make the power of the Ministers as unreal as that of puppets. Lastly, the division of subjects between the reserved and the transferred halves is such that the pith and marrow of a government are with the former. As regards the conflicts between the two halves of the Government, the Governor is made in effect a constitutional dictator in the province and Dyarchy can be tempered only by the frequent exercise of his powers. Further the power of the Governor on his sole authority to make laws relating to a reserved subject contrary to the decision of the Legislative Council furnishes a capital instance where the reformed Legislative Councils possess much less power than their predecessors. That one man can make laws quite as valid as the laws made by a Legislature and in the teeth of the latter, proves our charge that the Reform Act has in reserved departments set up an irresponsible autocracy.

The position as regards transferred subjects is no whit better, though we frequently make Dyarchy the gravamen of our charge against the Reform Act as if its removal alone will end all our troubles. For, we must remember that in respect of transferred subjects there is no responsible government and the mere transfer of reserved subjects to additional Ministers on the same statutory conditions as at present govern transferred subjects will not improve matters. At the outset, each Legislative Council has a solid block of nominated and official members to support the views or policy of the bureaucracy on questions relating to transferred subjects though a majority of elected members may decide otherwise. Thanks to the nominated members and to the number of special constituencies, supple, reactionary or obscurantist, the composition of a

Legislative Council is such that the Ministers have to depend upon the support of the Governor and his Executive Council. Nor is it very difficult for a Governor to form, against a majority group of elected members, a Ministry with the aid of a minority group of elected members and of his own nominated and protected block. This has been done again and again in every province. This inherent vice in the structure of a Legislative Council deprives it of any real representative character and its elected members of any adequate power. Secondly, under existing conditions, the power of appointing Ministers exercised by a Governor is not a mere technical mode of naming the established leaders of the majority in the Council but is a substantial power of patronage by which a nobody or anybody can be made a *benami* leader to carry out the Governor's policy. Thirdly, we all know that a Legislative Council has no control over the items of expenditure known as non-votable under each transferred head including the salaries and allowances and all other payments of officials belonging to superior services in that department. These non-votable items amount to a high percentage of the expenditure relating to each transferred subject. Fourthly, the Ministers have little or no control over the members of the Civil or other public services serving in departments dealing with transferred subjects, and the Governor has and exercises the power of making all appointments to posts in the transferred departments. The statutory independence of the Indian Civil Service is the most outstanding feature of the Reform Act. All the parliamentary apparatus of a responsible government will prove to be a costly and pompous futility unless the completest control over the Indian Civil and other services is unreservedly secured to Ministers fully responsible to a wholly elected legislature. Fifthly, the Governor is empowered to over-ride the Ministers' decisions on questions relating to a transferred subject and direct him to act otherwise. Sixthly, the Governor has an emergency power—the emergency to be determined by himself—to authorise expenditure notwithstanding a vote of the Legislative Council in respect of transferred subjects.

Seventhly, the Governor has power to stop legislation in respect of transferred subjects notwithstanding the opinion of the Legislative Council. Eighthly, he can return a Bill relating to a transferred subject to the Council for reconsideration with his recommendations which are in effect obligatory. What this power means was forcibly illustrated by Lord Willingdon in Madras in connection with the Hindu Religious Endowments Bill. Ninthly, when a Governor cannot through his Ministry manage a Council to his satisfaction, he can himself administer the transferred subjects as happened in the Central Provinces. Tenthly, a Minister can hold office during the Governor's pleasure which does not mean the formal expression of the Council's pleasure but his own independent pleasure against the opinion of the Council, as was vividly demonstrated by Lord Lytton in Bengal. Eleventhly, the Governor is entitled to disallow any motion for the adjournment of the business of the Council to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance even when it relates to a transferred subject. Lastly, the allocation of the revenues for the administration of transferred subjects depends primarily on the will of the reserved half and of the Governor and not on the decision of the Legislative Council.

I have restated the position under the Act only to make it clear that even if Dyarchy goes, a Legislative Council will have control over the transferred subjects only if and when the Governor allows and not otherwise.

The Majority Report of the Reforms Inquiry Committee concedes that the Dyarchy which was introduced is "clearly a complex confused system having no logical basis, rooted in compromise and defensible only as a transitional expedient." It is not possible to imagine to what it is a transition or how it is defensible except as an expedient for putting off the grant of Swaraj or of substantial reforms leading to Swaraj. The majority of the Committee add:

> While the period during which the present constitution has been in force has been too short to enable a well-founded opinion as to

its success to be formed, the evidence before us is far from convincing that it has failed.

This oracular judgment is much too ingenuous to deceive any one and is a sufficient condemnation of the system of hybrid executives, councils partly elected and partly nominated and all the other devices of the sham scheme of reforms which was admitted by its authors themselves to be charged with potentialities of friction. The Minority Report of the Reforms Inquiry Committee concludes that "the present system has failed and is capable of yielding better results in future."

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Nor can it be pretended that the Central Government is at all responsible to the Indian Legislature. In the first place, that Legislature has no power of the purse. Nearly three-fourths of the expenditure of the Government of India excluding that on Railways, is withdrawn from the vote of the Legislative Assembly and as to the remaining fourth, the Government is empowered to restore any demand which has been refused or reduced by it. The Governor-General has also an emergency power to authorise at his discretion any expenditure, he being the sole judge of the emergency. In the next place, the Governor-General may direct the stay of any bill, clause or amendment. In the third place, in addition to the power to make temporary ordinances, the Governor-General is given, what he had not before the Reforms Act, the autocratic power of certifying any bill and signing it as a permanent law on his sole and absolute authority notwithstanding the refusal of the Legislature. Fourthly, the Assembly is neither wholly nor in reality a representative and democratic chamber. Between a third and a fourth of its strength consists of nominated members and a three-fourths majority of elected members is required to defeat the Government and to enforce the popular will. For, the Government's 40 votes are bound to neutralise at least an equal number of elected votes. Further, from amongst the elected strength must be deducted the seats provided for special constituencies which, in the Assembly as in Provincial Councils, are

amongst the fortifications of the bureaucracy. Lastly, there is for the Government the additional safeguard provided by the second chamber. And the Council of State is so planned and constructed as to checkmate the Assembly and to form an impregnable citadel for the Government. It has, time and again, proved itself to be reactionary and has turned down the decisions of the Assembly on most vital questions. For instance, it agreed to the enhancement of the Salt Tax and to the Finance Bill and supported the certificate of the Viceroy against the decision of the Assembly. It rejected the Bill passed by the latter for the repeal of the Criminal Law Amendment Act. It passed the Bill relating to the Bengal internees, that was rejected by the other chamber and the resolution relating to the Lee Commission recommendations against its decision and it approved of the recommendations of the Majority Report of the Reforms Inquiry Committee against the opinion of the Assembly.

It is then abundantly clear that the centre of gravity both in the Central Government and the Provinces, alike in transferred and in reserved departments, when analysed closely, is, both in fact and in constitutional theory, in the Executive Government, in other words, in the bureaucracy. It would therefore be a tragedy if we still sought to discover, in all this statutory hypocrisy, the germs of self-government.

DESHABANDHU'S OFFER

While our national demand remains rejected, there has been no response to the gesture of peace that was made by the heroic figure of Deshabandhu Das. No fairer offer could have been made than was made by him at Faridpur in his great and moving appeal for reconciliation. As he said :

> The Government should guarantee to us the fullest recognition of our right to the establishment of Swaraj within the Commonwealth in the near future and in the meantime till Swaraj comes, a sure and sufficient foundation of such Swaraj should be laid at once. Further, the Government should divest itself of its wide discretionary powers of constraint and follow it up by a general amnesty for all political prisoners.

The long history of repression, that has darkened our struggle for freedom, proves that the curve of repression and the curve of reforms go intertwined ; of repression gilded with reforms, of reforms withered by repression. The case of the Bengal internees as well as of the Sikh patriots is about the most flagrant violation of elementary justice we have had ; and the harrowing story of the Bengal Ordinance and other internees as well as the earlier story of the Punjab agony and abasement shows that we are asked always to move in a vicious circle with shame and humiliation as our badge, and not Swaraj as our birthright. No settlement with the Government can be held to be just or honourable that does not involve a complete reversal of all repressive measures and a clear guarantee against their future repetition.

Further, while the plea was set up that the Government of India Act could not be revised before the appointed term in the direction of more substantial concessions, no difficulty was found by the Government in amending the Act so as to give effect to the Lee Commission recommendations involving an annual increase of 1¼ crores of rupees in the emoluments of the superior services.

INDIA'S STATUS

Again, while India is being denied Swaraj, the Inter-Imperial Relations Committee of the Empire Prime Ministers has restated the position of the Dominions as "autonomous communities within the British Empire equal in status and in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs though united by common allegiance to the Crown and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations." That Committee adds, and rightly, that every Dominion now and always must remain the sole judge of the nature and extent of its co-operation. India is, of course, excluded from this privileged communion. She is not to be a free country, equal in status to the Dominions, but is to bear the galling burden of an Empire ; and the nature and extent of her co-operation are to be determined for her by others.

The time has, I think, come when we must make it clear to others and to ourselves that if England wants India to remain within the British Empire, it can be only on the terms just stated ; and that otherwise none can or should set any limits to her freedom.

If we confine ourselves to the abolition of Dyarchy are we certain that the residuary powers of the Governor will be surrendered ? What again is the use of responsible Provincial Government without a responsible Central Government ? The comedy will be enacted differently but its spirit and purpose will be there if the Central Government is not a fully responsible government. Supposing again, both the Central and the Provincial Governments are made responsible governments and we are still not to touch the Civil Service, the position will be no better. The Indian agents of the foreign bureaucracy will be more numerous and there will be more competition for Ministerships but the masters will be the same. We cannot therefore compromise on the question of appointment and control of the services or provide for them a dual control. Any scheme of self-Government will be nothing but an empty form if the control over the army and navy and the control over the political relations with Indian States, as distinguished from foreign relations with other countries, are not given to our Swaraj Government. Any such reservation will deprive the Indian Swaraj Government of financial, administrative and political control over the Indian people including Indian Princes. Otherwise, self-governing India will be menaced by an army under foreign control and the Indian States will be perpetual thorns in its side, if nothing worse. These departments are now included in the definition of Dominion Status and form items 1 to 4 in the schedule of central subjects administered by the Government of India and are indispensable for the maintenance of a real Swaraj Government.

ARMY AND NAVY

The naive concession made by some of our friends as to our incapacity to administer the army and the navy

contradicts our demand for Swaraj and supports the argument of the advocates of the alien rule that tell us: "You cannot have an army and navy to defend you: how then can you have Swaraj?" It is but an illustration of our diffident mentality to assume that we cannot maintain or control an army or navy. There is absolutely no truth in it. There is a splendid Indian army which has distinguished itself in a hundred fields in all parts of the world. That the Muhammadans and the Mahrattas formed and led armies in other days according to the then standards of equipment and efficiency proves that there is no inherent deficiency in the Indian people in that respect. If one thing more than another is illustrated by any true history of India, it is that our people had plenty of martial spirit. As to the navy, the ancient Indian people were an adventurous and sea-faring race and had far-flung colonies. But, it is not the historical or racial argument that calls for enlargement, for Free India can buy and man a fleet and maintain an army on the most modern lines. It is in ultimate analysis nothing but a question of finance and the training of men. Japan and China and all the lesser states of the world that enjoy self-government have found these things and there is no reason why we cannot find them. I would, therefore, urge upon you that we should clearly think out what Swaraj means and should not abate an iota in our demand for full self-government.

In the meantime, our paramount duty is, as I have already urged, without waiting any longer for a response that does not come, to organise more completely than we have hitherto attempted, the will of the nation on our demand for Swaraj.

OUR COUNCIL PROGRAMME

To that end, the twin principles of self-reliance in all nation-building work and of resistance to every anti-national activity must inspire all our efforts, as they certainly inspired the non-co-operation phase of the struggle. In that view and in view of our present limitations, and for the immediate present, the programme of work both in the

councils and in the country, as laid down by the Congress at Cawnpore cannot, I think, in its general outline, be easily bettered.

And first as to work in the Councils, the general policy of Congressmen in the Assembly and the various Councils should be one of resistance to every activity, governmental or other, that may impede the nation's progress towards Swaraj; and in particular, Congressmen in the legislatures should:—

(*a*) refuse to accept offices in the gift of the Government until in the opinion of the Congress a satisfactory response is made by the Government to the national demand;

(*b*) refuse supplies and throw out budgets (unless otherwise directed by the All-India Working Committee) until such response is made by the Government;

(*c*) throw out all proposals for legislative enactments by which the bureaucracy proposes to consolidate its powers;

(*d*) move resolutions and introduce and support measures and bills which are necessary for healthy growth of national life and the advancement of the economic, agricultural, industrial and commercial interests of the country;

(*e*) take steps to improve the condition of agricultural tenants by introducing and supporting measures to secure fixity of tenure and other advantages with due regard to the rights of the Zamindars; and

(*f*) generally protect the rights of labour, agricultural and industrial, and adjust the relations between landlords and tenants, capitalists and workmen.

This was framed in the light of experience so as to be acceptable to as large a number as possible of workers in

the political field and it represents the minimum amount of resistance that is required for the success of our movement.

THE QUESTION OF OFFICE

Controversy has raged round the question of non-acceptance of office; but it should be easy to come to a decision upon it, if we kept in view the spirit and objective of our fight against the bureaucracy. In no province is the Congress party in the Council in an absolute majority so as to be able to take office and dictate terms to the head of the Government and the reserved half. To form a ministry, it will have to coalesce with other groups and to lower its flag and to lose its distinctive character. And any such Ministry if formed can hold office only on sufferance and with the support of the Government and its nominated and official group of votes. On the one hand, it will be indistinguishable in achievement or rather the lack of it, from a Ministry formed by any non-Congress group of members. If, on the other hand, it attempts to maintain its spirit and carry out its purpose it must either resign instantly or acquiesce ignominiously in its failure. Again, a strong Minister can only attempt to improve some of the details of administration but can neither help to change the system of Government nor can effect even material improvements in administration. By improving a detail here and a detail there of administration, he would rather help to perpetuate the existing system of Government by casting his reflected benevolence on the bureaucracy. In reality, no one who has closely followed the achievements of Ministers in the several provinces can seriously believe that any Ministry can, without a proper system of self-government, get good government for the country.

We should also clearly realise that the power of an opposition, though indirect, is very real and much more effective than the power of Ministers and that if we are disciplined and energetic and in sufficient numbers in any Council, we can carry out our policy and programme more easily than the Ministers.

The refusal to accept office till a satisfactory response is made, constitutes an amount of political pressure that is

necessary and sufficient to induce the Government to come to a settlement. By accepting office, the Congress is bound to become an unconscious ally of the bureaucracy. And, if the most advanced party in the country takes office, where will be the determined and disciplined opposition in each council to fight against Dyarchy or for Swaraj? Neither the Ministers nor their party can openly speak and vote against the administration of reserved subjects. Again, neither the refusal of the Government to release political prisoners and internees nor the rejection of our reasonable demand nor that of our offer of honourable co-operation can be forgotten when we are asked to take office, not as part of a settlement, but as a token of our unconditional surrender. Our self-respect prohibits us from retracing our steps when, instead of defeat, victory beckons us to march ahead.

It is said that if we cannot organise forthwith civil disobedience there is no other honest alternative than to own ourselves beaten and accept office. Neither horn of the dilemma exists save in one's imagination. The policy we are pursuing is thoroughly logical and practical and, if persisted in for a while longer, will be crowned with success. After the severest denunciations of the Reform Act on a thousand platforms and the most cogent demonstration of the futility of taking office, it were an anti-climax to think of Ministries now. I am certain that the Government wants Congressmen to become Ministers only on the terms of "sober and whole-hearted co-operation" with the reserved half and the bureaucracy. I am sure, we are all convinced that without a fair measure of self-denial we shall never be able to achieve anything, and that a policy of continuous opposition and resistance to the bureaucracy is required to give tone to our organization and life and vigour to our movement. Lastly, let us not forget that the policy of non-acceptance of office is neither unconditional nor for all time. On the other hand, its relaxation or modification depends upon the attitude of the Government and its willingness to agree to conditions more or less similar to those that were adumbrated by Deshabandhu Das at Faridpur.

Objection is raised to the continuance of our present policy in the Councils on the ground that it has been tried for the past three years and that we are not yet in sight of the realisation of our hopes. The charge of barrenness is falsified by the party's splendid record of achievement in the last Assembly and in the Councils, and by the results of the general elections as a whole. Shall we forget that it was to create an atmosphere of resistance both in the Councils and in the country that we entered the former and that we succeeded in making their atmosphere invigorating and markedly different from what it was before? We have not yet fully acquired the habit of resistance. And the power of resistance must be indefinitely increased till it fulfils itself. Again, this time, the work in the country must be our first care; it will then easily gather such volume and intensity as to sweep everything before it.

The Cawnpore session of the Congress marked a turning point in the history of the Congress and of the country. By making the programme and policy of the Swarajya Party its own and by absorbing that party, the Congress gave a new orientation to our political activities. It resolved upon the nationalisation of the legislatures established by Government by bringing them under its own control. This change of attitude on the part of the Congress towards legislatures has been fiercely attacked from more than one quarter. It has been denounced as a constitutional heresy to claim for the Congress a control over the Legislatures. The justification of the claim is, however, obvious. Experience during the period of the non-co-operation movement had shown that the Councils functioned as anti-national institutions and thwarted the attempts of the Congress to obtain Swaraj. It was, therefore, necessary to ensure that the political institutions established by the nation and the political institutions established by the Government should function as a single organ and speak with one voice.

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Our foremost duty is to keep constantly before our eyes the vision of Swaraj, what it is, what

it requires of us and what it will not permit us. It means nothing less than that the Congress should have the fullest control over the people and should have a steadily increasing number of workers knit together in bonds of unshakeable loyalty and perfect understanding. It is only in proportion as the control of the Congress over the people increases in area and in intensity we can obtain or establish Swaraj. We must make the Congress the centre of all our activities and build up Swaraj in and through it. It is, therefore, right and wise for the Congress to organise thoroughly all the electorates whether for the Legislatures or local bodies and to bring them under its discipline and control. The millions that have the franchise and the millions that have not, have to be habituated to accept voluntarily and cheerfully, the mandates of the Congress as the mandates of a national government. While the aim of the non-co-operation movement was to form the national administration leaving the political and administrative bodies under the influence, discipline and control of Government, what we should now do is to bring under Congress control not only the people who are more or less indifferent to the political and administrative institutions of Government but also those who seek to utilise them directly or indirectly. At the recent elections, have been demonstrated the love of the people for the Congress and their willingness to come under the Congress banner. It is of the very greatest importance that the electorates for the legislatures and local bodies should be so thoroughly educated and nationalized that they and the Congress may become identical in spirit, purpose and action, if not in numbers. The Congress, and not the Government, must issue mandates to the Legislative Councils, to the local bodies and to the village administrations. Under this scheme, both the work in the country and in the Councils can be so closely interrelated as to develop the maximum amount of political pressure against the Government. When the electorates, the legislatures and the Congress learn to act as a single organisation, sanctions for the enforcement of national

rights and demands will, of themselves, spring into existence.

Again, we have to organise the country in respect of the many serious grievances of the people. They are not yet fully alive either to their rights or to their wrongs. The study and investigation of grievances must form an essential part of Congress work. The Congress members of all the legislatures should meet as a separate national legislature and frame model laws for adoption by the people. The remedying of grievances must be upon the basis of self-reliance and resistance and not on the basis of co-operation with the Government. The people must be taught to assert their rights and to develop their powers of self-reliance and resistance. The issues of prohibition, of taxation of land and above all of unemployment will give us sufficient momentum and take us a long way forward.

If incessant propaganda is carried on in town and in village, if the Congressmen inside and outside the Councils interest themselves, each group in the work of the other, and if people are organised in respect of grievances upon which they feel most strongly, the end will soon be in sight.

We must establish village *sabhas* that shall, under Congress mandate, administer village affairs and be the units of a permanent Swaraj. The great practical difficulties that are in the way must not depress us but should only serve as a powerful stimulus to exertion. Mastery, as has rightly been said, is acquired by resolved limitation; and the acid test of Indian leadership, of resolute patriotism and of constructive ability consists in the determination and contentment of men to organise and lead villages for the cause of Swaraj. The secret of success in the work of village reconstruction mainly lies in the discovery of apt rural leadership.

In this way, the Congress will ere long become the national government.

CAPTURE OF LOCAL BODIES

The work that I think must next be undertaken is the apture of local bodies in every province. Both in

connection with the constructive programme and on its own merits I would urge upon you the need for such action. If Congressmen pledged to carry out the constructive programme and to follow the advice of local Congress committees make it a point to capture as many seats as possible in the municipalities and local boards, the national movement will gain tremendously in strength. You can, in the first place, powerfully help the anti-drink campaign and place it on a practical basis; you can also nationalise education in municipal and board schools and spread the cult of Khaddar amongst teachers and boys and amongst municipal voters and employees. You will be able to devise ways and means to relieve unemployment to an appreciable extent. And those in service of local bodies will become nationalised if their administration is undertaken by Congressmen. You will benefit the people in other practical ways, besides giving them the advantages which a municipality or board is intended to give but so seldom gives. In the second place, Congressmen will acquire local leadership and establish control for the Congress over the people of the locality. At present, the control is either exclusively with persons who are hostile or indifferent to the national movement or is divided between them and us. The present influence of the bureaucracy and its ministerial or other allies over local bodies must be replaced by ours and the hold of the Congress over the people greatly strengthened. In the third place, you will be able to communicate to others that burning love of country that is in you. Fourthly, it will enable all sections of Congressmen to come together and will give us additional organisations from which and by which the fight for Swaraj can be carried on. Lastly, village reconstruction and village government can with the resources of the local bodies be more easily achieved than if we have to set about that work without such aid. We have already succeeded to some extent in the direction of nationalizing local bodies and have demonstrated its feasibility. Neither the occasional failure of the experiment nor academical arguments founded on obsolete theories, nor all the undoubted difficulties incidental to elections and the

formation and maintenance of parties should deter us from persevering in it. The local bodies must be reformed by the abolition of nominated seats and must become parts of our great national organisation.

CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME

No less important than the programme of work in the Councils and in the local bodies is the constructive programme of the Congress. Neither our political preoccupations, nor any comparative table of values which one may frame for one's self should make us forget that Khaddar, prohibition and removal of untouchability as well as the other items of work are vital aspects of our national movement.

KHADDAR

Thanks to Mahatma Gandhi's inspiration and iron will, the restoration of the Spinning Wheel to its ancient primacy has made the boycott of foreign cloth real to an appreciable extent and has powerfully stimulated Swadeshi spirit and enterprise in all forms and directions. It has by its persuasiveness affected to a visible extent the national psychology, and has lent a new dignity to our manhood and womanhood. For, it has given us a feeling of self-respect and has raised the Indian name in the estimation of the Western and Eastern World. From bitter hostility and contempt it has journeyed through all the stages of misunderstanding and has at last found a home in our hearts. It has demonstrated our constructive ability and is increasingly providing relief for unemployment while the State is doing nothing to mitigate it. Above all, work in this direction means love and love means influence. And the political pressure exerted by a boycott of foreign cloth is there all the time. The transfer of jurisdiction over Khadi production from the Congress to an expert organization has, I think, ensured for it a permanent and conspicuous place in our national life unaffected by the controversies and fluctuations of politics. I trust the All-India Spinners' Association will become a nation-wide labour organization which, if it cannot be identical with

Swaraj, will go some way towards it. For, its potentialities are considerable; it can greatly help in the work of village reconstruction and in the establishment of village government. During 1925-26, Khadi production was 19 lakhs and this year it is expected that there will be an increase of 25 per cent. The increase in output has been accompanied by a steady improvement in quality and in patterns and Khadi has become distinctly cheaper. Nevertheless, the demand for Khadi is not as rapid and universal as one would wish. It is, therefore, our paramount duty to see that continuous political and patriotic backing is given to Khadi and to the boycott of foreign cloth and that the new spheres of influence which our national organization has won through the message of Khaddar are not lost to us by our indifference to it. And let us remember that of the two greatest achievements of Mahatma Gandhi, Non-Co-operation and Khaddar, though it is difficult to decide which is the greater, Khaddar is at once the radiant symbol of our self-reliance and of our power of resistance.

PROHIBITION

We have not, I am afraid, latterly paid much attention to the question of total prohibition. Our movement will gain in moral grandeur if we successfully organise the will of the nation in that behalf. The measures that were adopted during the active period of non-co-operation were no doubt marked by temporary exaltation and magnificently illustrated our spirit of sacrifice. They have, however, led to no permanent changes in the landscape. No Minister has during the past six years been found, and I doubt whether a Minister will now be found, to be courageous enough to bring in a bill for total prohibition and to resign his office on its rejection or disallowance. Anyhow, while the fight for Swaraj is carried on in the legislatures and outside, we must devise effective ways of removing the drink evil which is among the greatest causes of proverty in many provinces. In my province, where the Congress Party in the Council is pledged to make total prohibition a major issue, next only to Swaraj,

the drink revenue amounts to nearly 6 crores of rupees out of a total provincial revenue of 16 crores. At least twice the amount of revenue derived by the Government in each province under Excise will represent the minimum loss to the people. The loss of revenue to the State due to a policy of total prohibition is more apparent than real; for there is bound to be more than corresponding increase in national wealth. It can, however, if necessary, be made good in other ways and should not make us hesitate to take decisive measures. I do feel that on this point the national conscience is not yet sufficiently roused. And yet both Islam and Hinduism can easily supply tremendous driving power if we will but put our hands to it.

UNTOUCHABILITY

The removal of untouchability was long confined to the platform of social or religious reform and did not then make rapid progress. By making it one of the items of the constructive programme of the Congress, we have, under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership, almost in the twinkling of an eye materially changed the attitude towards it alike of the educated classes and of the masses. The final solution of the question, however, depends in great part upon the improvement of the economic conditions of the vast bulk of the untouchables. And the time has, I think, come when in order to ensure its speedy accomplishment, increasing concentration on it is required. As in the case of Khadi, an *ad hoc* organisation consisting of enthusiasts and religious and social reformers will, if properly led, be able to complete the work so splendidly begun by the Congress. Neither foreign nor domestic critics are, however, right when they assert that untouchability is a formidable obstacle to Swaraj, or that its removal will automatically bring about Swaraj. We cannot wait for Swaraj till it is removed any more than we can wait till caste is abolished. There is the capital instance of the United States of America achieving freedom long before the abolition of a very real and widespread slavery. But we must all agree that we must make

an end of untouchability, apart from any question of Swaraj and whether we ever win Swaraj or not. While I would deprecate the iterated rhetorical stress on untouchability as a serious impediment to Swaraj and the consequent admission in favour of foreign domination, the higher philosophy of Hinduism as well as the history of religious dissidence in our country emboldens me to claim that the rule against untouchability has neither part nor lot with the indestructible soul of Hinduism. Judged by any test, humanitarian, rational or spiritual, patriotic or democratic, we cannot with decency uphold in Hinduism the dogma of an immutable untouchability. It clouds our vision, limits our experience, hardens our heart, narrows our sphere of responsibility and prevents our ideals of justice, love and sincerity from being perfect. The feeling that a particular caste or tribe or sect as such is by divine ordinance invested either with a mystic superiority or spiritual guardianship over others or has been condemned by God to bear the visible symbols of a hopeless degradation is destructive of the divinity in man, which is the central doctrine of Hinduism. It is not good for any one, neither for the guardian nor for the ward. As an *Ahaval* of Kapilar, current in my province, puts it: "Who can see any unlikeness of form between men such as there is between bull and buffalo? Vasishta born of lowly mistress to Brahma like red water-lily springing up in mire; Sakti born of a Chandala woman to Vasishta; Parasara born to Sakti of Pulaiya woman; Vyasa born of a fisher-girl to Parasara; all these by study of the Vedas rose to high estate and are famous as holy men." And if we are still in doubt, it is dissipated when we listen to Vemana's disconcerting query: "Why should we constantly revile the Pariah? Are not his flesh and blood the same as our own? And of what caste is He who pervades the Pariah?"

We must therefore, realise that untouchability is but the offspring of man-made custom and has no divine sanction behind it. On the other hand, from the point of view of Hinduism, it prevents it from spreading far and

wide and sending its roots deeper and robs it of the transforming influence of missionary fervour.

The Congress Party in the Legislative Councils will, I have no doubt, attend to these and to the other items of constructive work to the extent to which they can be furthered in and through the legislatures. I trust it will, in particular, tone up the educational institutions belonging to or aided by the Government and secure the passage of enactments, including, in courses of compulsory studies, such subjects as will inculcate in boys and girls a consuming patriotism, courage and a wide national outlook.

LABOUR AND UNEMPLOYMENT

The organisation of labour has been included by the Congress at Cawnpore in its constructive programme. We must give it a front place in our work for the coming year. The welfare of labour, its housing, its provident funds and industrial insurance and all the other things required for improvement in the treatment and conditions of labour are of great national importance. They constitute a reserved subject though they concern us more than the bureaucracy. Labour legislation in India whether it concerns registration of trade unions or other matters is by no means satisfactory. Labour is not represented by its own men in the existing legislative bodies as the present electorates are too unmanageable and expensive. And nomination is a wholly inadmissible method of securing representation either of labour or of the depressed classes or of any class of the population. The Congress must therefore increasingly promote the welfare of labour and the Congress party in each legislature should represent its interests and pay special attention to its requirements. Fortunately labour in India is becoming more and more insistent on its rights and is slowly organizing itself. There is perfect identity of feeling and interest between the national movement and labour. None need fear that in India the legitimate interests of labour will be sacrificed to capitalist interests; or that the Congress can neither reconcile them nor be just to both.

Next to Swaraj, the greatest of India's needs is the relief of poverty and unemployment. Owing to a variety of causes it has assumed colossal dimensions. The average income of an Indian is hardly Rs. 68 per annum. We are face to face with unspeakable squalor and misery and starvation. The first duty of a Government is to take adequate measures for their removal; but under the present system of Government the problem is wholly ignored. Otherwise, will the present Government, for instance, establish the great industry of ship-building on a large scale or start a line of state-owned steam-ships that will earn freight for India and give employment, as Indian Railways do, to tens of thousands of Indians? Assuredly not. We want Swaraj for the purpose of discharging what according to our tradition and culture is our paramount duty. For, Swaraj has to be won before we can establish industries on a large scale and adequately deal with the problem of poverty and unemployment. In the meantime the Congress party in the several legislatures should make every attempt to get laws passed compelling the Government to relieve unemployment by the establishment of State industries, by opening up of new tracts for cultivation and in other ways. It should also educate the country and link unemployment to the Swaraj movement in such a way as to produce an increasing amount of pressure on the Government.

GOVERNMENT'S CURRENCY POLICY

A grievance of considerable magnitude has recently arisen in connection with the currency and exchange policy of the Government. The recommendations of the Currency Commission adopted by the Government do not establish the effective gold standard with gold currency which India needs for her prosperity but are injurious to Indian interests. These and the resolve of the Government to fix the exchange at 18*d*., its continued deflation of the currency and its sales of Reverse Council Bills contrary to the clear assurance given by the Finance Member that the Assembly would first be consulted, have exasperated Indian public opinion. They are bound to result in gross injustice

to our industries, to our agricultural population and to our exporters. A little reflection will make us agree that the lower price of imports is no compensation especially when we remember the expenditure on imported goods by the vast bulk of the consumers is but a small percentage of their total expenditure. The loss inflicted upon India is very substantial, whether we have regard to the drop of 12½ per cent. in the real value of agricultural produce or of exports or have regard to the competition between products of Indian and foreign industries or to consequential increase in agricultural indebtedness. Nor will additional taxation be, as contended, necessary if the exchange is at 16*d*. The question should not be regarded as a recondite question for economic Pandits or as if its eventual adjustment does not mean serious loss at present. The currency policy of the Government has a far-reaching importance; it not only affects certain key interests but the general welfare of the country. To say that sections of Indian capitalists want to exploit us is but an attempt to prejudice us which must be resisted. In our fear lest our own capitalists use us, let us not allow ourselves to be exploited by foreign capitalists in the interests of England and to the general detriment of India. I am confident that we shall be able to hold the scales even not only as between rival communities but as between rival interests in India. I cordially welcome the formation of the Indian Currency League and trust that it will adequately educate public opinion on the question of the ratio of the gold standard, gold currency and other cognate questions. But I am certain the League will be able to achieve nothing either by debate and vote in the Assembly or by protest outside, unless it comes into line with the Congress and unless its members harness themselves to the dynamic politics of the Congress.

INDIAN STATES

Indian States, in the opinion of some friends, present a difficult and delicate question in connection with our demand for Swaraj. The difficulty only exists so long as we do not go into it and the delicacy arises because we

have one view for British India and another for Indian States. I share, to the full, the sympathy of all those who think that Indian States are a kind of very imperfect Swaraj. They remind us of the high estate from which we have fallen and our national instinct, sound in the main, prompts us to preserve these relics of an ancient dignity. But the reconciliation between sentiment and the imperious necessity for Swaraj is by no means difficult. The rulers of Indian States ought, in their own interests and in the interests of their subjects, to content themselves with the position of hereditary governors or administrators of their territories under a system of representative institutions and responsible government. It is better, much better, for an Indian ruler to be the head of a democratic government and to rely on the support of his people than to occupy the very dubious and anxious position he does at present. He will then, if he is a just and wise ruler, be in a safer, freer and more dignified and influential position than he is in now; if he be unjust or vicious, he will not deserve any protection either from the present government or from Free India. The population of the Indian States is about 72 millions, somewhat less than a third of the population of British India. The identity of sentiment and civilization, of interest and aspiration, between the two is unaffected by political barriers; and echoes of our Swaraj movement are heard in the States. The people of British India, when they are fighting for Swaraj, are entitled to have the Indian States brought into line with British India. Matters affecting the relations of the Government with Indian States or relating to the affairs of such States, ought not to be excluded, as they are at present, from the consideration of the central legislature. We in British India are, by ties of blood, religion, culture and business so intimately connected with those in the Indian States that it is impossible to deny them our help in their aspirations and in their grievances. The people of each State should have such representation in the Assembly as may be necessary to safeguard their interests till each Indian State obtains a system of responsible Government.

GREATER INDIA

The lineaments of our great ancestry reveal themselves in us to-day however thin in the transmission, the ancient blood has become. And the adventurous spirit of early India which built up long ago a greater Bharata Varsha to the East and to the West, to the North and to the South is not extinct. It is now seen in the greater India which our brethren, in humble and laborious fashion, are building for us in far off lands against unparalleled odds. The status of Indians abroad, whether in South Africa or Kenya, in Fiji or Guiana, in Ceylon or Malaya, in America or Australia, depends inevitably upon the status of Indians in their own land ; and Swaraj for India depends in its turn upon the brave and unfaltering spirit of our kith and kin across the seas.

The patient industry and skill of the Indian labourer wins rich fields or cereals and sugarcane, plantations of rubber, tea and coffee and smiling gardens of fruit, flower and vegetable from virgin forests and unpromising lands amidst the hardships of unfamiliar countries and climates. He is therefore induced, with the permission of the Indian Government, to emigrate to distant countries where he lives a life of incessant toil and misery often unsweetened by the happiness of a real home. But when the need for his labour ceases, he is asked either to submit himself to humiliating conditions or given notice to quit. The position of Indians in South Africa and Kenya stands on a much worse footing while their claims to equality are distinctly greater. Indians abroad are of all classes and positions and should be entitled to full rights of citizenship there just as much as others. In any case the term "cooly" connotes the dignity of labour and the Indian cooly settler, lowly as he is, is far superior in status to the original convict settler in Australia. No white man, I believe, refuses to employ an Indian on a lower wage, but his passion for improving the lot of Indians insists on their adoption of higher standards of living.

With patience and perseverance, our brethren are solving the question of racial equality all over the world.

We can help them only by winning Swaraj for India. In the meantime, the Cawnpore resolution to open a foreign department to look after the interests of overseas Indians and to carry on propaganda concerning their status has to be sufficiently implemented. The deputation of our South African friends to India last year was an education in itself. I would suggest the holding, once in a way, of a session of the Congress in South Africa. Further, a small committee should be appointed to go to the principal foreign countries where Indians, whether traders, students, labourers or others, reside, so as to get into direct personal touch with them.

ASIATIC FEDERATION

The time has perhaps come for us seriously to think of a Federation of the Asiatic peoples for their common welfare. So long as our neighbours were ruled by irresponsible autocrats, such an idea was clearly out of the question. Now that Angora, Persia, China and Siberia are governed by democracies, a federation of Asiatic democracies will make for peace, prosperity and freedom of Asia and therefore comes within the range of practical politics. Signs are not wanting to indicate that our neighbours take keen interest in us and we must reciprocate it. In order to promote better understanding and closer relations between India and other Asiatic countries, frequent interchange of visits by appropriate delegations should be arranged, as well as other steps taken. We have too long neglected the possibilities of a culture and business union with all Asiatic countries.

COMMUNALISM AND NATIONALISM

I have reserved, to the last, my remarks on the struggle between communalism and nationalism. The critical phase of the struggle is over and the issue is no longer in doubt. The riots and disturbances that have recently disfigured our social life have drawn forth nearly all that is bad in communalism. The forces of nationalism are steadily and visibly triumphing over the forces of communalism. The results of the elections in the Punjab and the United Provinces are as much due to serious

divisions amongst Congressmen as to the confusion caused by communal cries. Those two provinces have not, as it appears to me, given their verdict in favour of communalism. For the number of Congress candidates that succeeded there on the Cawnpore mandate is larger than the number that succeeded on the Hindu communal ticket. In Bengal, Bihar, Madras and in the rest of India, the answer of the electorates against communalism has been decisive. In Madras the electorates, with the masses of the general population at their back, have cashiered a communal party that for 6 years, thanks to Lord Willingdon, has been responsible for the acute tension of feeling between Brahmin and non-Brahmin. They have loyally supported the Congress ideals of nationalism, unity and justice and have effected a remarkable change in the atmosphere of the province. Electorates predominantly non-Brahmin in composition have returned, either unopposed or after contest, Brahmin and non-Brahmin Nationalists to the local council and to the Assembly and the brunt of the fighting was borne by patriotic non-Brahmins, not less hungry than others for Swaraj. In Bihar, the loyalty to the Congress both amongst Hindus and Muslims has been very striking and the national harvest for Council and Assembly is abundant. In Bengal, the Congress party in the Council will be much stronger than before and communalism has been held in check. I feel sure Bengal will maintain, as ever, her political primacy.

That communalism is a negation of nationalism and is an obstacle to Swaraj, is being rapidly and very generally realised. I am confident that wherever intensive propaganda, sincere and persuasive, clearly analyses the fallacies underlying it, communalism will go to the wall. Happily, prejudice and suspicion are not deep-seated amongst Indians and communalism is but their offspring. Again, who will not agree, after some political education, that communal conflicts necessarily involve that there should be an arbiter and that if the whole of India were divided into two warring communities, the arbiter would

always be a foreigner? We must not only reach, but hold fast to the conviction that we are Indians first and last and right through. National representation and national leadership must be our aim and not communal leadership and communal representation. A patriotic Hindu or Mussalman should, at all times and at all costs, desire to represent and lead not only his own community but the other community as well.

In Great Britain, differences of race, language and habits between Englishmen, Scotchmen and Welshmen did not prevent them from establishing self-government. Nor did the bitter and prolonged struggles between Protestants and Roman Catholics prevent the advent of self-government in England, France and Canada. Nor did the divisions between the white races in South Africa make the grant of self-government impossible. The differences between Hindus and Mussalmans or between Brahmins and non-Brahmins are by no means such as to prevent them from being one nation. There is no conflict of interests between them in respect of all those matters which tend to their common welfare or make for a national advance or relate to the establishment and development of self-governing institutions.

FUNDAMENTAL SAFEGUARDS

Religious doctrines and institutions and such social usages and personal laws as have historically been due to a distinctive culture are alone peculiar to any religious community. There should therefore be a fundamental law of Swaraj to guard against the making of laws by any legislature in India that may affect liberty of conscience, freedom of religious observance or association, the right to religious education and, at the option of the community concerned, the right to personal laws. Another safeguard has been devised by the Working Committee of the Congress to prevent communal hatred and strife and to protect the legitimate interests of minorities. The rule is to the following effect:

> No bill, motion or amendment relating to any inter-communal matter should be moved or discussed

if a majority of three-fourths of the members of any community affected thereby in the legislature, are opposed to the introduction or discussion of such a bill, motion, or amendment. And the Congress party in the legislature concerned, should take such steps as may be possible to give effect to this resolution in each case. But if their efforts are not successful, and a three-fourths majority of the members of any community of the Congress party affected by such an intercommunal question, consider that it should not be made a party question then the Congress party in the legislature shall refrain from making it a party question.

PLEA FOR TOLERANCE

In the early days of a world faith, again, conversion was of its essence. Though each community should be free to make conversions, no resort to conversion is really any longer useful or necessary. For, the lives of the best and most pious men in each community are a fitter and more effective propaganda in that behalf than definite missionary effort. But wherever the latter is made, it should be open and general and neither secret nor directed to the converting of particular men or women. Let us realize that no great and long-established religion gains in truth, beauty or spirituality with any increase in its census figures.

It is not by hatred of another's religion or of those that profess it that the interests of one's own religion are advanced. Asoka in his Edict on tolerance proceeded on abundant experience and a clear perception of the "essence of the matter", as he calls it, and of real and lasting values. Says he:

"He who does reverence to his own sect while disparaging the sects of others wholly from attachment to his own, with intent to enhance the splendour of his own sect, in reality by such conduct inflicts the severest injury on his own sect."

COMMUNAL REPRESENTATION

Moreover, no community can, in these days, really progress in secular affairs unless the nation as a whole advances, unless, in other wards, the other communities either acquiesce in the rise of one community or make equal progress. The best way of advancing politically one's own community is, therefore, to raise the status of all the communities as a whole. For, if you seek to advance your own community, all the other communities bind themselves together against yours. Communalism is not so much a positive idea of benefiting one's community as a destructive desire to obtain advantages at the expense of the other communities. And how, one may well ask, is a community benefited by one of its members securing a post in Government service or succeeding in an election ? If he conducts himself justly and honestly as a member of the public service, members of his community can share only in the general good and can gain no undue advantage. If, on the other hand, he favours them at the expense of others, he will become unjust and corrupt. Again, what is every-day distrust between two individuals of the same community is dignified into communal distrust or tension when it arises between two individuals belonging to different communities, though, in both cases, the motive or cause, whether it be ambition or envy, bad temper or enmity, necessity or greed, difference in opinion or temperament may be the same.

That much abused expression communal representation is a misnomer ; for all the communities are equally interested in all public questions and in the country's problems and in particular solutions of them. Such differences as exist are temperamental and individual and not at all communal. Taxation and other burdens imposed by the State bear on all and grievances are common to all and methods of redress or agitation are not peculiar to a community. Nor is it by mathematical or mechanical formulae that justice between communities in the matter of the services or in other matters can be rendered. The Congress stands for equal rights and opportunities for all classes, castes and

communities. And Indian nationalists are developing a high sense of justice ; they are even sensitively just. Let us realize clearly that to uphold justice between man and man is to uphold justice between community and community. As a safeguard, a negative rule against members of any community or caste monopolising offices in all that is required. There are so many communities and there is so much of competition in these days in India that it is impossible for any community to create such a monopoly. Again, neither a Hindu nor a Muslim member can at all represent his religion in a Legislative Council on any question except where his religion is sought to be affected.

POLITICS AND RELIGION

The intrusion into politics of religion, and very often of dogmatic religion, must be resisted as a primitive or mediaeval idea, born of theocracies, and disastrous alike to religion and to politics. Hinduism and Islam will gain immeasurably in strength and purity if they are not mixed up with secular politics. I do not speak of morality or of spiritual quality which is common to all great religions ; for thereby politics and organizations are cleansed and made sweet and wholesome. In the evolution of States, theocracies have not survived as they were responsible for fanaticism, persecution and internal strife and neglected the material welfare of the people and the proper arts of government.

HINDUISM AND ISLAM

Lastly, let us clearly grasp the truth that neither Hindusim nor Islam stands in danger of being destroyed by the other. Both are great religions, ages old ; and both have an abiding hold on vast populations. They have again and again come into severe conflict with each other and have survived it, as they have survived the shocks of foreign invasions and foreign civilizations and all other catastrophic changes. In mediaeval conditions, Hinduism and Islam both continued to flourish in full vigour, independent of the religion of powerful despots who were backed up by their own communities, numerous and armed.

In modern times, when there is far greater religious tolerance, and when autocracies have been replaced by democracies and democracies are notoriously secular in their outlook and priestly influence has largely declined, it is wholly chimerical to imagine that if either the Hindus or the Muhammadans in a province constitute a majority in a democratic form of Government, the religion of the minority will suffer. No proselytizing can equal the hearty crusading fervour of early and mediæval times: and the two great religions of India have in spite of innumerable conversions and re-conversions adjusted and consolidated themselves and have acquired an adamantine stability. A Hindu State that attempts with all its authority to destroy Islam will be subverted in a minute and a similar fate will befall a Muslim State that attempts to destroy Hinduism.

Let us not forget, in the fever of political controversy, that the strength of each religion is derived from God and is rooted in the souls of Prahladas. Not all the tortures of a Torquemada nor all the burning at the stakes nor all other forms of persecution have been able to destroy the mystic quality of the human soul. Neither Hinduism nor Islam derives or requires strength either from the present or from any future Government. Both stand far, far above Swaraj which is not comparable to them. Neither foreign Governments nor self-Governments, neither democracies nor autocracies, can destroy that seed of faith which is in every one of us, that inspired interpretation of the universe to which one clings for guidance and solace in this world and for salvation in the next. Hindus and Mussalmans have lived in the past and will live in the future as patriotic fellow citizens and firm and loyal friends. In the transaction of public affairs, in all matters of secular advancement, in all aspects of the administration and on all public, political and national questions, they easily can and should think and feel and act as Indians. I fervently appeal to Hindu and Mussalman leaders with all the strength of my feeble voice to consider the need for concerted action in a calm and dispassionate spirit and to unite indissolubly for their common deliverance.

APPEAL FOR UNITY

It appears to me that the vision of Swaraj has become somewhat dim in the dust of internal strife and our hunger for it less keen in our greater desire for the philosophy of individualism. The need of the hour is not philosophy but action, not freedom for the individual but freedom for the nation, not alone unity in ideal and object, but also unity in method and action, direction and pace, and above all, not polemics and projects but organization and discipline, first and last and right through. The question naturally suggests itself: Should we have distinct parties in the country or in the Congress? I know the weight of names is against me, but I would beg a calm and earnest examination of the question with Swaraj brain and Swaraj heart. The answer comes again and again from the depths of our being, from the holy of holies, from our tortured soul, that the righteous should link hands against unrighteousness. There can be only two parties in India, the party of the Government and its adherents that obstruct Swaraj, and the party that fights visibly and unceasingly for Swaraj. An army has several arms, but it would be a singular army indeed if its cavalry fought its infantry and its artillery opened fire on both. The duties of all groups or parties in the country and in the Congress is vigorously to co-operate with one another in their fight for Swaraj just as the arms of a sensible army will do in a real war.

I deprecate the philosophy of individualism in a supreme struggle for freedom against a powerful people with their trained bureaucracy and with unlimited material resources. On a question whether a particular course is wise or unwise, will succeed or fail, will accelerate Swaraj or retard it, to make one's opinion or judgment or feeling a matter of conscience is false philosophy. On a point of religion, of morality, of honour, one's own conscience must be the arbiter, but in transacting the affairs of a country, when a decision is not irreligious, immoral or dishonourable, I fail to see how we may rely on our right to differ from one another and yet uphold the discipline necessary for an organization fighting for Swaraj. If the soldiers in any

army claim similar right when engaged in a battle they will have short shrift at the enemy's hands. We want freedom for our country and must, therefore, pay the price for it.

Again, shall we cease to be constantly on the alert and prefer the easier to the harder way, retreat to advance? Shall we avoid taking prompt decisions, refrain from action when a decision has been come to or indulge the critical mood? Shall we not concentrate on the imparting of a new momentum, the attracting of fresh recruits and the consolidation and stiffening of our ranks? Or, shall we relax our wills and substitute patience for impatience, little things for big things, discretion for valour, policy for truth, dogma for faith, and sweet reasonableness for stern determination.

Do we feel that we are unfit to undertake the Government of the country? Is it not actually run by Indian officials and are not the English overseers merely concerned in laying down policies which their Indian subordinates and colleagues who are in no better position than subordinates, are obliged to carry out? The machinery of the Government is already there, only the directing brain and voice are needed and that surely can be supplied by us.

What is needed to break our bonds is only that we should get rid of this creeping paralysis of brain and will, of this hypnotism which the foreigner exercises over the Indian official and un-official, whether his opponent or his friend. The conditions in India are so favourable to the immediate attainment of Swaraj that it were an easy achievement if we could but set our hands to it. One or two men in every village or town have but to shoulder the responsibilities of a real and lasting leadership. Character and transparent patriotism, steady courage and average ability are all that is needed for the purpose. We have been trying to build leadership from above which is an impossible process and from abroad which is a destructive process. We must build leadership from the base and on the spot itself. Efficient local leadership alone and not

propaganda or programmes of sorts will solve the problem. For, Swaraj means the ability to set up a local Panchayat or leader that will command continuously the loyal and energetic support of the people in the locality.

With the greatest fervour and in all humility, I would appeal to all leaders, all groups of workers and all schools of thought, in and outside the Congress, to put aside all differences for one brief year and stand together as comrades in arms determined to win freedom. We all, whether Swarajists, Responsivists, Independents or others, long for unity; and none among us is anxious to emphasise or perpetuate differences. But we all long equally ardently for Swaraj. May I, therefore, request all friends, whether they agree or not with all that I have said, to see if it is not possible to reconcile the longing for unity with the longing for Swaraj, without affecting either and in such a way and by such methods as shall amaze and baffle and discomfit the Governments in India and in England at this critical hour.

We can restore our faith in ourselves only by restoring our faith in each other, for without an atmosphere of energetic good will and of freedom from suspicion and prejudice, it is impossible to perfect the work of organization that we have begun or to reimpose the splendid discipline that staggered the world till the 10th of March, 1922.

CONCLUSION

Swaraj is not an intellectual but an emotional proposition. We must cherish it in our hearts with unquenchable faith. Neither genial humour nor mordant sarcasm, neither the persuasion of friends nor the wrath of foes, neither appreciation nor calumny should make our patriotism tepid or qualify the singleness of our purpose. We must, therefore, become possessed by a passion for Swaraj that is not warped by fallacies and impulses, that will stand for a uniform and rapid corporate advance in serried masses, that will know no obstacles, that will not wax and wane with the seasons, that will not be daunted by imprisonments or depressed by failures.

Forty-second Congress—Madras—1927

Dr. M. A. ANSARI

FELLOW-DELEGATES, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I find it difficult to put into words my deep sense of gratitude at the confidence you have placed in me by calling upon me to preside over the deliberations of the Indian National Congress, at this critical juncture in the history of our struggle for freedom. This meeting of the Congress, at Madras, takes me back to the day—more than a quarter of a century ago—when as an under-graduate, full of hope and enthusiasm, I had my first glimpse of our great national gathering. Little did I dream then that in that very city it would fall to my lot to occupy the Chair which has been filled in the past by some of the greatest sons of India. Our national movement has increased in force and volume since those days. The political awakening of the people has become widespread, the intensity of the struggle has become more severe and, with the march of time, the problems we are called upon to solve have grown more and more complex. The task of your President has, in consequence, become delicate and difficult. It was only the hope that I could count upon your indulgence towards my shortcomings and your generous support in the discharge of my duties that encouraged me to undertake this heavy responsibility.

The inter-dependence of political problems in different countries and the dangers arising out of the economic and political bondage of India to the peaceful progress of humanity at large, specially to the interests of the workers in Great Britain, are being gradually realised and while Imperialist and Capitalist interests are carrying on an organised campaign of misrepresentation and

vilification against India in order to justify and perpetuate its exploitation and subservieuce, the presence, among us to-day, of the distinguished fraternal delegates from across the seas, gives hope that fellow-victims of Imperialism and Capitalism in other parts of the world have begun to appreciate the necessity of closer co-operation and joint action to fight the common enemy. I offer these friends a sincere and cordial welcome on behalf of the Indian National Congress and the people of India.

A matter of greater pleasure and satisfaction to me is that my appeal for a re-united Congress has met with such a generous response. I rejoice to find among us once more veterans and tried champions whose names are inseparably associated with India's fight for freedom. I cordially welcome all these comrades and fellow-workers back to the fold of the Congress and hope and pray that, as in the past so in the future, the country will derive the fullest benefit from their services.

INDIA AND IMPERIALISM

In the statement I published some time back I had touched upon the salient features of the existing political situation and briefly expressed my own views regarding the most effective method of dealing with it. I do not, therefore, propose to address you at great length to-day. But even in a brief survey we must take into account every issue that has direct bearing on the furtherance of our political programme. All schools of political thought in India are agreed that the goal of our activities is a free and self-governing India, offering equal opportunities to all and recognising and guaranteeing the just and legitimate rights of all sections and classes, at peace within herself and friendly with the rest of the world. Indians do not claim anything more or less than that they shall occupy the same position and enjoy the same rights in their country as free people do in their own. If this can be achieved within the Empire, they have no desire to break away from it but if the Imperial connection stands in the way of our reaching the goal, we should not hesitate to sever that connection. Our motto, in the words of Mahatma Gandhi,

should be "within the Empire if possible, without if necessary".

I do not minimise the difficulties in our path. They are many but none so formidable as the one arising out of the aggressiveness of Imperialism and the greed of High Finance, the two most fruitful sources of trouble and misery in the world to-day. Empires are carved and nations are deprived of their liberties to satisfy the Imperialist ambition and to monopolise resources in raw materials to feed the factories in Europe and to secure exclusive markets for their output.

Politicians and statesmen wax eloquent over the "*mission civilisatrice*" and the "white man's burden", but none has exposed the hollowness of these professions better than Cecil Rhodes, the great pioneer of Imperialism in South Africa, when he said: "Pure philanthropy is very well in its way but philanthropy plus five per cent. is a good deal better." Joseph Chamberlain, that High Priest of Imperialism, was more outspoken. "The Empire," he said, "is commerce," and India, he was frank enough to add, was "by far the greatest and the most valuable of all the customers we have or ever shall have". The history of this philanthropic burglary on the part of Europe is written in blood and suffering from Congo to Canton. The steel-frame theory of Government, the arrogant claims to trusteeship of dumb millions and the newly-invented illusion to cloak the pre-war Concert of Europe, known as the League of Nations, are but different manifestations of the same spirit. So long as these dangerous doctrines are pursued, the sources of human misery shall endure. India holds in her hands the remedy for this universal misfortune, for she is the key-stone of the arch of Imperialism. Once India is free the whole edifice will collapse. The best guarantee for the freedom of Asia and the peace of the world, is a free and self-governing India.

CONGRESS POLICIES

The problem then is how to free India. For over a generation the leaders of public opinion in the country

advocated and practised a policy of complete co-operation with the Government. That policy was doomed to failure from its very inception. Co-operation is possible between groups with common ideals. Where objects pursued are diametrically opposed there can be no co-operation. Co-operation in such circumstances can only mean surrender of the most cherished ideals on the part of the weak to the wishes and desires of the strong. The difference between the ideals of the two nations is nowhere brought out more vividly or in greater relief than in the report of the late Mr. Montagu, a Liberal Secretary of State for India, noted for his pro-Indian sympathies. The report, which forms the basis of the Government of India Act of 1919, while promising progressive realisation of responsible government and extending lavish hopes for the future, clearly lays down :

> It seems to us axiomatic that there cannot be a completely representative and responsible Government of India on an equal footing with the other self-governing units of the British Commonwealth until the component States whose people it represents and to whom it is responsible, or at least the great majority of them, have themselves reached the stage of full responsible government. *Nor even then can we say that the form or the degree of responsibility which will be reached in India will exactly correspond to that attained by the Dominions.* The final form of India's constitution must be evolved out of the conditions of India, and must be materially affected by the need for securing Imperial responsibilities.

If, however, our rulers forsake their divine mission of civilising "the inferior races" and cease to act the executors of the decrees of Providence, if they realise that a friendly and free India will be a better customer than a sullen and hostile dependency kept under political and economic bondage, in short, if they recognise that there are civilisations and cultures equally good, if not better than their own, if they cease to think in terms of the ruler and the ruled and are prepared to meet us on terms of equality, it will then be time for us to revise our views on Co-operation.

An alternative policy advocated, on the set-back received by the Non-Co-operation Movement, was to

capture the Councils and, by creating constitutional deadlocks, force the Government to yield to the wishes of the people. The advocates of this policy, however, failed to give its proper weight to the fact that the limitations imposed by the Government of India Act of 1919, rendered all such opposition ineffective and the creation of consititutional deadlocks a practical impossibility. They, no less than the advocates of the policy of Co-operation, should have realised that an ultra-constitutional issue could not be fought on a strictly constitutional plane. In a trial of strength there can be no hope of success if your opponent is also the referee. Practical experience has demonstrated the futility of such a policy even in Provinces where the believers in this method commanded a majority. They undoubtedly succeeded in exposing the hollowness of the so-called Reforms and by preventing the Government from packing legislatures with "safe" persons, they made it impossible for the rulers to present their autocratic and high-handed actions as representing the declared will of the people expressed through its chosen representatives. But all this has not materially advanced our cause nor has it brought us any nearer our goal, while the price paid for it is too dear. It has diverted the energies of some of our ablest men from problems of real national importance. The Council Programme, adopted at a time of depression, was professedly in the nature of an experiment. We gave it a trial and if it has not fulfilled our expectations there is no reason to feel discouraged or disappointed. Let us revise our policy in the light of our past experience.

There are no two opinions regarding our goal. We all desire to see India free and self-governing. For the achievement of our object we are not wedded to any particular policy, nor do we consider any programme *sacrosanct* or binding for ever. We have to judge a policy or a programme by its suitability to our peculiar social and political conditions, by its practicability and by the results which it is likely to give within a measurable period of time. We have now before us the results of the three

experiments made by the Congress during the last forty years. We gave an unbroken period of thirty-five years to Co-operation, about a year and a half to Non-Co-operation and four years to the policy of Obstruction within the Councils and Constitutional Deadlocks. We can, at this stage, appraise the real value of each programme and judge the comparative merits and demerits of each. Co-operation has led us nowhere. Obstruction within the Councils has not given us any better results. Non-Co-operation certainly did not achieve all that was expected of it but it was through our own weakness and inability to rise to the high level demanded by it and not through any inherent defect of that policy. Non-Co-operation did not fail us, we failed Non-Co-operation. We did receive an unquestionable and a serious set-back in the first encounter. I also admit that in the present atmosphere of mutual suspicion and hatred created by deplorable communal quarrels and with the whole country divided into hostile political camps and factious groups, there is no prospect of an immediate resumption of Non-Co-operation. The spirit of Non-Co-operation, however, has come to stay as a potent force in Indian politics and as I have said elsewhere :

> I feel as certain as ever that apart from very extraordinary and unexpected occurrences we shall win back our freedom only by self-discipline, self-organisation and self-help and through a movement in which we would be obliged to resort to direct action in some shape or form. I firmly believe that India is only recuperating from the moral and material effects of a disastrous war and would soon emerge once more resuscitated and rejuvenated to attain what it is destined to attain.

How best then can we help this process of resuscitation and rejuvenation and prepare ourselves for the next encounter ? It is my unshakable belief that this cannot be done unless we have established unity in the country, unity in the congress, and unity in the councils, if people must still make use of them. Differences of opinion are inevitable. They have existed and will continue to exist. What we have to learn is the stage at which these differences, if persisted in, become injurious to the general interest of the country. We must learn to differentiate

between personal prestige and public weal and to sacrifice individual gain to the collective good.

HINDU-MUSLIM RELATIONS

There is no feature of the Indian political situation more disquieting than the shameful quarrels between Hindus and Mussalmans. No language can be too strong to condemn the murderous assaults and callous destruction of life and property in the riotings which occur with such painful frequency. Hardly a day passes when we do not hear of some violent outburst of communal fury in one part of the country or the other, leaving its legacy of bitterness and hatred threatening to reduce the country to one vast camp of warring communal factions bent on destroying each other. It is due to this that the Congress itself has lost in popularity. It is being relegated in many Provinces to a secondary position, and preference is being given to communal organisations, specially those which are militant. This state of affairs must not be allowed to continue longer. The problem of Hindu-Muslim differences must be solved once and for all and there is no organisation more competent and better fitted to put an end to it than the Indian National Congress.

While attempting to solve the Hindu-Muslim question we should not, however, mistake the sympton for the disease. The political and religious differences which are straining the relations between the two communities are but outward manifestations of a deeper conflict, not peculiar to India or unknown to history. It is essentially a problem of two different cultures, each with its own outlook on life, coming in close contact with one another. The best remedy lies in a recognition of the right of each culture to exist, in a development of a spirit of tolerance and respect and in the encouragement and cultivation of cultural affinity by the establishment of national institutions where young people of both the communities will come into touch with each other and get opportunities to study and understand the ideals underlying the civilisations of both. The educated Indian is forced by circumstances to study

European culture but knows next to nothing about the culture of his fellow countryman living next door. It is time this dangerous isolation and colossal ignorance were ended. With greater knowledge of each other's deep-rooted sentiments and sympathy for each other's ideals, questions of separate representation, cow-slaughter and music before mosques will become matters of the past, of interest only to research scholars of Indian History.

In the meantime, we cannot afford to minimise or neglect the problem which faces us to-day. There are certain fundamental facts which it will be well for Hindus and Mussalmans to remember. They should not forget that they are Indians destined to live in India and die in India. Providence has bound their fates together indissolubly. If there be any Hindu brother of mine who imagines that he can get rid of seventy millions of his Muslim fellow-countrymen, he is labouring under a great delusion and the sooner he is disillusioned the better for him and the country. Similarly, if any Muslim brother of mine is dreaming of lording it over two hundred and fifty millions of his Hindu countrymen, he is living in a fool's paradise and the sooner he opens his eyes the better for the Muslim community and India. The Swaraj we are striving for will be neither Hindu Raj nor Muslim Raj. It will be a Joint Raj protecting the just and legitimate rights and privileges of all. Perpetual warfare cannot be the normal state of human society. The work in the communal cause apparently wishes to improve the economic, political and educational position of his community. With this I have no quarrel. But for any solid and lasting good to be done either to a group or to a nation, tranqullity and peace are essential conditions. Violent communal outbursts may benefit any other party, they certainly cannot benefit the country nor do they serve even exclusive communal interests. Instead of resorting to these barbarous methods of settling differences, I would appeal to my countrymen to make use of the great national tribunal, the custodian of the rights and privileges of all sections and communities inhabiting this country, the Indian National Congress, for

the protection of their rights and the redress of their grievances.

A subject people trying to shake off foreign domination cannot afford to carry on an internecine struggle. We cannot in one breath talk of freedom and such communalism, for they are the very antithesis of each other. It would be difficult for an outside observer to believe in the genuineness of our demand when he observes the fratricidal war we are waging to-day. Our very patriotism begins to appear a sham. In our efforts to gain a little advantage here and a little advantage there over our rivals, we are unconsciously playing into the hands of the common adversary whose position is being strengthened every day. Can we not all with one joint effort and determination get rid of this degrading mentality? Self-respect, even self-interest, requires us to enlarge our vision and look beyond momentary and sectional advantage to the lasting national gain.

HINDU-MUSLIM DIFFERENCES

The causes of communal antagonism exercising the minds of the leaders of the two communities as brought out at the various Unity Conferences crystallise themselves into two distinct groups : Political and Religious.

POLITICAL

It will serve no useful purpose to enter into a description of how the Mussalmans, fearing that the sense of political responsibility of the majority was not sufficiently advanced to trust it with the protection of their rights, demanded separate representation and separate electorates. It is a matter of past history and every one in this assembly is fully aware of it. It is enough for our present purpose to state that, realising the disastrous consequences recent developments were likely to lead to, the Indian National Congress, at its annual session last year at Gauhati, called upon the All-India Congress Committee to devise measures for a settlement of the trouble in these terms :—

> This Congress calls upon the Working Committee to take immediate steps in consultation with the Hindu and Mussalman

leaders to devise measures for the removal of the present deplorable disturbances between Hindus and Mussalmans and submit a report to the All-India Congress Committee, not later than the 31st March, 1927. This Congress authorises the All-India Congress Committee to issue the necessary instructions in that behalf to all Congressmen in the country and take such other steps as it may deem fit after consideration of the said report.

The President got into touch with the leaders of public opinion in both the communities. He travelled extensively all over the country to mobilise the good sense and active co-operation of both communities and, finally, arranged a series of conversations at Delhi. It is a great tribute to the sincerity, zeal and indefatigable energy of Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar, that a formula for settlement of outstanding political differences was at last discovered. I would be lacking in my duty if I did not place on record the appreciation of the Indian National Congress of the spirit of patriotism and statesmanship displayed by the Muslim leaders who rose above prejudice, suspicion and narrow communal outlook and boldly came forward with the proposals which presage a new orientation of Muslim policy in India. The Working Committee, at a meeting held on the 15th May, "considered the proposals made by representative Muslim leaders who met in Delhi, on the 20th March last, as well as the opinion of the Hindu Maha Sabha and other Hindu organisations and the opinions of other leaders and representatives of both communities," and submitted its report to the All-India Congress Committee, on the 16th May, 1927. The resolution, embodying the recommendations of the Working Committee passed by the All-India Congress Committee, with the unanimous support of all the members present, including some of the foremost leaders of the Hindu Maha Sabha, speaks volumes for the political sagacity of the Committee and was a personal triumph for the President and his great powers of persuasion.

The All-India Congress Committee approves and adopts the report of the Working Committee on the Hindu-Muslim question and the recommendations contained therein and calls upon all Congress organisations to take necessary steps to have the following recommendations carried out:—

1. That in any future scheme of constitution, so far as representation to the various legislatures is concerned, joint electorates in all the provinces and in the Central Legislature be constituted.

2. That, with a view to give full assurances to the two great communities that their legitimate interests will be safeguarded in the Legislatures for the present, and if desired, such representation of the communities should be secured by the reservation of seats in joint electorates on the basis of population in every province and in the Central Legislature ;

Provided that reciprocal concessions in favour of minorities including the Sikhs in the Punjab may be made by mutual agreement so as to give them representation in excess of the proportion of the number of seats to which they would be entitled on the population basis in any province or provinces, and the proportions so agreed upon for the provinces shall be maintained in the representation of the two communities in the Central Legislature from the provinces.

3. (*a*) That the proposal made by the Muslim leaders that reforms should be introduced in the N. W. F. Province and British Baluchistan on the same footing as in other provinces is, in the opinion of the Committee, a fair and reasonable one, and should be given effect to, care being taken that simultaneously with other measures of administrative reform an adequate system of judicial administration shall be introduced in the said provinces.

3. (*b*) (*i*) That with regard to the proposal that Sind should be constituted into a separate province, this Committee is of opinion that the time has come for the redistribution of provinces on linguistic basis—a principle that has been adopted by the constitution of the Congrees.

(*ii*) The Committee is also of opinion that such readjustment of provinces be immediately taken in hand and that any province which demands such reconstitution on a linguistic basis be dealt with accordingly.

(*iii*) The Committee is further of opinion that a beginning may be made by consituting Andhra, Sind and Karnatak into separate provinces.

4. That, in the future Constitution, liberty of conscience shall be guaranteed and no legislature, central or provincial, shall have power to make any laws interfering with liberty of conscience.

Liberty of " Conscience " means liberty of belief and worship, freedom of religious observances and association and freedom to carry on religious education and propaganda with due regard to the feelings of others and without interfering with similar rights of others.

5. That no Bill, Resolution, Motion or Amendment regarding intercommunal matters shall be moved, discussed or passed in any legislature, Central or Provincial, if a three-fourth majority of the members of either community affected thereby in that legislature oppose the introduction, discussion or passing of such Bill, Resolution, Motion or Amendment.

Inter-communal matters means matters agreed upon as such by a Joint Standing Committee of both communities, of the Hindu and Muslim members of the legislatures concerned, appointed at the commencement of every session of the legislature.

This resolution is a great advance on the Lucknow Pact of 1916, which has so far regulated Hindu-Muslim relations. Its terms are so clear that there is no need of any further comment from me. I should, however, like to emphasise the importance of the decision regarding joint electorates. The one great cause of friction so far has been separate electorates. If the success of a candidate at elections depends entirely on the votes of his co-religionists the tendency to exaggerate and accentuate points of communal friction and division in order to catch votes is inevitable. The resolution, while making the fullest possible allowance for the fear of minorities regarding adequate protection, by reservation of seats, presents fresh opportunities for the development of a spirit of friendliness and mutual confidence, the best augury for a United India.

The acceptance of the principle of representation on the basis of population puts our electoral system on a just and equitable basis. It puts an end, on the one hand, to the dissatisfaction felt at the preferential treatment accorded to minorities and, on the other, removes the grievance of the majorities in Bengal and the Punjab which were reduced to minorities. At the same time, the special interest of minorities have been safeguarded by the provision that if a three-fourths majority of their representative opposes any measure affecting their interests it shall not be even discussed or moved.

The right of the Indian National Congress to settle communal differences has been challenged in certain quarters. It has been contended that the Congress has no jurisdiction in inter-communal matters, whether political or

religious. I hold that no communal organisation or organisations put together, can supersede the Congress or enjoy even a parallel jurisdiction. The Indian National Congress is not meant for registering the decrees issued by the different communal organisations. It is primarily and essentially the only organisation that can deal with such matters and hold the balance even between community and community. If leaders of communal groups can come to a just and amicable agreement on any questions agitating the minds of their respective communities the Congress would unhesitatingly welcome it. But if they fail to arrive at an agreement the Congress, as the paramount national organisation, must step in and perform its obvious duty of adjusting communal relations and preserving communal peace and harmony undeterred by petulant threats and challenges from angry and disgruntled communalists.

RELIGIOUS

So far as political differences are concerned the Congress adopted a satisfactory formula for their solution at Bombay. But religious and social points of difference still remained to be settled and the President gave the leaders of the two communities an opportunity at Simla to come to an agreement on them. When the protracted negotiations ended in a fiasco the President took advantage of the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee to be held at Calcutta and issued invitations to prominent Hindu and Muslim leaders to give the Committee the benefit of their advice and help him and the Committee to complete the good work begun at Bombay. The result of these efforts is summed up in the two resolutions passed at the Unity Conference and adopted by the All-India Congress Committee :

1. Conversion.—The All-India Congress Committee resolves that every individual or group is at liberty to convert or reconvert another by argument or persuasion but no individual or group shall attempt to do so, or prevent its being done, by force, fraud or other unfair means such as the offering of material inducement. Persons under eighteen years of age should not be converted unless it be along with their parents or guardians. If any person under eighteen

years of age is found stranded without his parents or guardian by persons of another faith, he should be promptly handed over to persons of his own faith. There must be no secrecy as to the person, place, time or manner about any conversion or reconversion, nor should there be any demonstration or jubilation in support of any conversion or reconversion.

Whenever any complaint is made in respect of any conversion or reconversion, that it was effected in secrecy or by force, fraud or other unfair means, or whenever any person under eighteen years of age is converted, the matter shall be enquired into and decided by arbitrators who shall be appointed by the Working Committee either by name or under general regulations."

2. Cow and Music.—"The All-India Congress Committee, while approving of the following resolution on the Cow and Music question as a fair settlement of opposite demands and points of view, authorises members of the Congress to carry on propaganda among Hindus and Muslims along the lines indicated in the resolution and calls upon the Working Committee to appoint a Sub-Committee for the purpose of carrying on such propaganda:

And further resolves that the resolution do come up for confirmation at the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee and the Congress to be held in Madras:—

'Whereas no community in India should impose or seek to impose its religious obligations or religious views upon any other community but the free profession and practice of religion should, subject to public order and morality, be guaranteed to every community and person.

Hindus are at liberty to take processions and play music before any mosque at any time for religious or other purposes but there should be no stoppage of the processions nor special demonstrations in front of a mosque nor shall the songs or music sung or played in front of a mosque be such as is calculated to cause annoyance or special disturbance to the worshippers in the mosque.

Muslims are at liberty to sacrifice cows or, subject to existing municipal laws regulating the slaughter of animals for purposes of food, to slaughter cows, in any town or village, in any place not being a thoroughfare nor one in the vicinity of a temple or a *mandir* nor one exposed to the gaze of Hindus.

Cows should not be led in procession or in demonstration for sacrifice or slaughter.

Having regard to the deep-rooted sentiment of the Hindu community in the matter of cow-killing, the Muslim community is earnestly appealed to, so to conduct the cow sacrifice or slaughter as not to cause annoyance to the Hindus of the town or village concerned.'

Whenever a complaint is made that any of the provisions of this resolution have been contravened, it shall be enquired into and decided by arbitrators appointed by the Working Committee by name or under general regulations and their decision shall be final."

Efforts at composing communal differences in the past have been handicapped by attempts on the part of one community to impose restrictions on the enjoyment of its rights by the other. The result was that instead of removing mistrust and suspicion and creating a respect of each other's religious sentiments the solution generally led to a further intensification of the strife. The resolutions of the All-India Congress Committee are based on the recognition of complete freedom of each community to enjoy its rights to minimum restrictions necessary for peaceful corporate social life. The fear of any curtailment of their rights having been once removed, an appeal to the higher sentiments of the two communities, to their spirit of toleration and forbearance, is bound to have greater chance of success. It is not impossible that each community may even voluntarily forego a portion of the enjoyment of its rights out of regard for the sentiments and feelings of the other.

The Congress has given a definite lead. It has prescribed a potent remedy to eradicate the communal canker which has been eating into the very vitals of our body politic. It is now for us Congressmen to carry on a vigorous propaganda to explain and popularise these resolutions and to bring them home to the Hindu and Muslim public all over the country. I earnestly appeal to every well-wisher of India, irrespective of his political creed, to lend a helping hand to the Congress in this noble cause. Specially do I appeal to the Press of the country to realise its great responsibility in the matter. There is no other agency which plays such an important part in the moulding of public opinion and the regulation of inter-communal relations. It is the powerful instrument for good or for evil and I regret to say that throughout this unhappy communal crisis, our Press, especially the Vernacular Press, has not exercised its influence for the good. With very few noble exceptions it has actually fanned the

flames of conflict and lamentably failed in the discharge of its duties. I cannot have any complaint against the Anglo-Indian newspapers. They naturally serve the interests that maintain them. But is it too much to expect from our own journals and journalists that they will subordinate their selfish considerations to the supreme interest of common national good and ally themselves with forces working for the restoration of concord and amity? The conduct of News-Agencies in the country has not been altogether satisfactory either. Let us hope that they too will contribute their share to the restoration and maintenance of unity in the country. Let us all realise that it is a matter of life and death for us and on the success of our efforts to achieve unity in the country depends the whole future of India.

If I have discussed at length the question of Hindu-Muslim differences it is because like the ubiquitous microbe it has infected every sphere of our national activity. I am conscious that the question of Hindu-Muslim relation is only part of the broader problem of the rights of minorities and backward classes. The Sikhs in the North and the non-Brahmans in the South and the so-called Depressed Classes all over India, equally deserve our close attention. I do not propose to deal at length with the Sikhs or the non-Brahmans, but I cannot resist the temptation of putting in a plea on behalf of the millions of "untouchables." The removal of untouchability, although a problem essentially for our Hindu brothers to solve, must still be a matter of the deepest concern to every Indian inasmuch as the presence of such a large section of our fellow-countrymen suffering under grievous social and political disabilities cannot but retard our efforts for the emancipation of our country.

UNITY IN THE CONGRESS

Next in importance to the re-establishment of communal harmony is the question of the reorganisation of the Congress on a wider basis. The set-back we received in the Non-Co-operation movement told heavily on the Congress. The keen enthusiasm of the palmy days of 1920

and 1921, when every city and every village had a Congress Committee of its own, began to cool down and, with the outbreak of communal dissensions, gave place to apathy and in cases, fortunately rare, to open hostility to the Congress. The communal question having been settled on the lines of the Bombay and Calcutta resolutions measures must be adopted to make the Congress franchise popular and to induce all communities to join the Congress in large numbers. I am glad our non-Brahmana friends have decided to come back to us and it gives me great pleasure to see them so well represented here to-day. It is, however, a matter of deep regret that the number of Muslims and Sikhs has dwindled considerably. The case of the Parsis, who took such a leading part in the early life of the Congress, is worse still. I wish particularly to address the Indian Christians who have so far kept themselves aloof as a body from the Congress. I should like to tell them that if they are under the impression that they can serve the interests of their community by remaining outside the Congress, they should take a lesson from the experience of my co-religionists. The Mussalmans of India allied themselves with forces other than national for a number of years and after bitter experience found out that they could advance their interests only by joining the Indian National Congress and making common cause with the rest of their countrymen. The Indian Christians will serve their community better by giving up their policy of isolation and adopting an Indian national outlook. I should like to see every section of our people entering into a healthy rivalry to contribute its share to the conduct of national affairs through the Congress. The doors of the Congress should be thrown wide open to all parties and we should stop at nothing short of a surrender of basic principles to bring back every party to the Congress. Differences of opinion are bound to exist but the best and the only place to fight them out is and should be the common platform of the mother of all political organisations in India, the Indian National Congress. Each party has an unrestricted right and opportunity to convince the Congress of the correctness of its point of view and to

enlist the support of the majority for the policy it advocates. If the majority, rightly or wrongly, fails to appreciate the correctness of that policy, until we have found a substitute for the rule of majorities, the only democratic and workable principle is to respect the decision of the majority. This does not mean that the minority loses its right to continue its endeavours to convert itself into the majority. Differences in detail or method should not be made the occasion of secession from the parent organisation and the setting up of a separate party outside. Multiplicity of parties on minor differences is bad enough for countries already free and independent. We who are fighting for our elemental rights cannot afford to indulge in the luxury of a cramping and complicated system of parties. A great responsibility rests on the shoulders of the Indian *intelligentsia* whose duty it is to educate the masses to a realisation of their rights and privileges. The confusion caused by the existence of a number of parties leads to distraction and the great work of the uplift of the masses remains neglected. Let us concentrate on the largest common measure of agreement rather than emphasise points of disagreement. After all, the points on which we agree are many and those on which we disagree but few.

UNITY IN THE COUNCILS

I do not believe in the Councils. At the same time I am aware that the Congress has permitted its members, if they so desire, to enter the Councils and a considerable number of my fellow-workers believe that they can render useful service to the country from inside them. To all these I humbly suggest that if they must go to the Councils the least that the country expects of them is that instead of allowing their opponents to take advantage of the division in their ranks they will join forces with other nationalist groups to form a People's Party of Opposition and present a united front. As it is, on a majority of problems the various nationalist groups have been invariably found in the same lobby. The instructions issued by the Congress for work inside the Councils can form a good

basis for unity of action. Should any alterations in these instructions be found necessary to facilitate joint action it is always open to any group to come to the Congress and press its view-point. And whatever decision the Congress gives should be loyally obeyed by all.

THE STATUTORY COMMISSION

"In the good old days" we looked forward with eagerness to the conferring of "boons" by our rulers. Well, Providence in its "merciful dispensation" has conferred upon us a real boon in the shape of the Statutory Commission. The manner in which the declared wishes and sentiments of the Indian people have been contemptuously disregarded should serve as an eye-opener even to the most confirmed optimist among us. It is the strongest and the most convincing plea for the sinking of our differences and closing up of our ranks. Much has been said and written on the Commission but little, as it seems to me, which touches the heart of the matter. Keen disappointment and surprise have been expressed at the exclusion of Indians from its personnel. I must confess I do not share any of these feelings. I am neither disappointed nor surprised. This was exactly what I had anticipated. It is not a question of the appointment of a Hindu peer or a Muslim knight, nor is it a question whether Indians should participate in its work as members, assessors or advisers. The principle involved is totally different. It is basic and fundamental. No sane or self-respecting Indian can ever admit the claim of Great Britain to be the sole judge of the measure and time of India's political advance. We alone know our needs and requirements best and ours must be the decisive voice in the determination of our future. It is our inherent and inalienable right. Taking its stand on these principles the Congress has all along advocated the convening of a Round Table Conference of the representatives of India and Great Britain with plenipotentiary powers to decide the bases of the future constitution of India, to be incorporated into an Act of Parliament. It is only on these conditions that Indians can, consistently with

national honour and dignity, agree to co-operate. Until Great Britain accepts these terms the Indian National Congress has no other alternative but to ask the people of India to treat the Statutory Commission as our Egyptian brothers treated the Milner Mission, and leave it severely alone. We can have no part or lot in a Commission which has been appointed in direct defiance of the declared will of the people of India.

NEED FOR A CONSTITUTION

The advent of the Statutory Commission should not divert our attention from the work of framing a constitution for India. The need for it had been felt for a long time and at the Bombay meeting of the All-India Congres Committee, the Working Committee was called upon to draw up, in consultation with leaders of political thought in the country, a suitable Constitution for India. A Constitution of this nature would remove suspense and doubt from the minds of the different communities regarding their position and status in the final political arrangement of the country. It would rally the different political parties round the Congress and prove of incalculable value in the education of the people in their political rights and privileges, telling them in exact language what they are called upon to fight for. Nor can we underrate its value in strengthening our hands generally in our struggle for the achievement of Swaraj.

To frame a constitution for a people consisting of 320 million souls, professing different religions and speaking different languages, will be the most unique and gigantic experiment in democracy ever attempted. The task of the framers will be further complicated by the presence of Indian States exercising sovereign rights in their territories. Whatever be the final form of the constitution, one thing may be said with some degree of certainty, that it will have to be on federal lines providing for a United States of India with existing Indian States as autonomous units of the Federation taking their proper share in the defence of

the country, in the regulation of the nation's foreign affairs and other joint and common interests.

As soon as the Draft Constitution is ready the Congress should take steps to call a National Convention consisting of representatives of all interests, communities and political parties to consider it and give it a final shape.

THE DETENUES

The greatest misfortune that can befall a people is to lose its independence. Patriotism, universally accepted as one of the highest forms of virtue in a free people, is condemned as a vile crime in a subject race. There are very few in the ranks of our public workers who have not, at one time or another, paid the penalty of their patriotic sentiments by being consigned to prison as ordinary felons. It is not possible to give the exact number of the victims of lawlessness perpetrated in the name of peace and order, but taking into account only those sentenced in the Komagata Maru Case, the Martial Law prisoners in the Punjab where boys of 10 and 11 years were condemned to transportation for life for "waging war" against the King, those incarcerated during the days of Non-Co-operation, the Sikhs imprisoned in connection with the Akali Movement and the large number of Moplahs punished and deported in 1922, the total swells to the staggering figure of 60,000. These 60,000, however, had the semblance of a trial in Ordinary Courts, Special Tribunals or the Martial Law Courts. The most tragic case is that of the hundreds of unfortunate young men who, for no other crime than the love they bore their country, have been condemned to a lingering death in the prime of their life, without even the mockery of a trial or the framing of a charge, under the provisions of that relic of legal antiquity, Regulation III of 1818, or that cruel weapon of coercion and repression forged in 1924, the Bengal Ordinance, subsequently put on the Statute Book under the dignified appellation of the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act, of 1925. The story of the detenues of Bengal reads like a page from the history of the Middle Ages with this difference that while in the Middle Ages the

moral consciousness of the world was not so well developed and the standard of civilisation was not so high, the tragedy of Bengal is being enacted in the twentieth century when the sense of justice and moral standards of right and wrong are several centuries in advance of medievalism and by people who claim to be torch-bearers of civilisation. It is the most damning confession of moral bankruptcy when the Government have not got the courage to bring these young men before their own law courts to be tried by their own judges and in accordance with the laws promulgated by themselves. I warn the Government against the consequences of the bitter conclusions such cruel persecution is burning into the very soul of the nation. Other governments have tried repression to crush the spirit of freedom and for the result one has only to point to Russia and Ireland. Even the most credulous among us would find it difficult to have any faith in the genuineness of the professed intentions of the Government with regard to the future of India and the high-sounding principles enunciated in that connection when elementary rights of citizenship and liberty of person are so flagrantly violated every day. Restoration to liberty of these young men would be some indication of the advent of a better spirit in the regulation of the relations between India and Great Britain. Our efforts should not be confined merely to the release of these unhappy detenues but a repetition of a similar outrage on the inviolable rights of citizenship in the future should be made impossible by incorporating in the fundamental laws of the country a Declaration of Rights guaranteeing to every citizen liberty of person, liberty of speech, liberty of association and liberty of conscience.

Closely associated with the question of the detenues is the question of Indian nationalists compelled to live in exile in foreign lands. We may disagree with their methods of work in the past but the abnormal conditions, which impelled them to adopt that course of action, have disappeared and there is no longer any reason why they should be denied the right to return to the country of their birth and to serve it peacefully.

It is not detenues and exiles alone who suffer. Ordinary citizens are being deprived of their freedom of movement and their right of ingress and egress is being tampered with through an ingenious administration of the regulations relating to the grant of passports. Passports have become one more weapon in the hands of the bureaucracy to be used against us. India has been turned into a vast internment camp and a number of Indians abroad have been successfully locked out. Respectable citizens have been prevented from leaving India even for purposes of health, business or travel. It will, perhaps, be difficult to find a more glaring example of the abuse of these regulations than in the cancellation of the passport of Mr. Shapurji Saklatwalla, M.P. Considered worthy of the highest honour and position of trust in England by the suffrage of English citizens, he has been declared unfit to enter the land of his birth. These disabilities must go and the fetters of the prison removed altogether.

INDIA AND ASIA

The task before us, as I have atready pointed out, is to put India on her feet. It goes without saying that we must primarily and mainly depend on our own resources and organisation to solve our problem, but it will greatly facilitate our task if we cease to view our problems as purely local. We have long committed the blunder of looking at them in an exclusively Indian setting. It is time we studied them in their international aspect and took note of every factor in world politics which has a bearing on them. The chief defaulters in this respect have been our Hindu brethren. Perhaps their peculiar social system and the self-sufficiency of the country fostered an outlook of isolation. When the British appeared on the scene they were not slow to take advantage of this spirit of isolation and turn it into a segregation so full and complete as effectively to cut us off from the rest of the world. So thorough was the blockade that we were kept in utter ignorance of the condition even of our immediate neighbours. The only contact vouchsafed to us was through London and only to the extent that suited the convenience

of Great Britain. We saw the world through British glasses.

The Mussalman, no doubt, did, now and then, disturb the placid surface of Indian indifference to developments outside. But his interest in world politics being mainly religious, the current of national thought flowed on as before. Isolation and segregation are no longer possible. Science has annihilated distance and removed barriers. The world has come closer. Events in one part of the world have their immediate repercussion in the other. The inter-dependence of problems in the different countries of the world has changed the entire conception of national politics. We stand to lose considerably if, without diverting our attention from problems at home, we do not take a practical interest in happenings and developments outside. In the conflict between Europe and Asia, Asia has been worsted because Europe could take concerted action against her piecemeal and defeat her in detail. The only hope of success in our efforts to check the forces of European Imperialism and Capitalism lies in Eastern nations coming closer and taking a more intimate interest in the problems facing them. Fortunately we are so placed that a part of our population has cultural affinity with countries in the West of Asia while another has similar relationship with the countries lying in the East of the Continent. Our economic problems are also more or less similar. Common culture and common interest should, therefore, facilitate the consummation of the scheme of an Asiatic Federation adumbrated by that great patriot Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das, whom nature had endowed with an imagination to which geographical barriers were no obstacles and a vision which encompassed all the races inhabiting Asia.

A happy beginning was made by the Congress in this direction by participating officially in the 'Congress against Imperialism' held at Brussels, and by becoming associated with the 'League against Imperialism.' A more important and practical step taken by the Congress was the proposal of sending a mission to give medical relief and assistance to the people of China in their present

struggle. The mission could not go as the Government of India refused to grant passports. The fact that the Government had to shift their ground twice in search of an excuse for the refusal clearly shows that the underlying motive of their decision was other than what was officially expressed. The plea that it would be a departure from an attitude of strict impartiality to allow a medical mission to go to the assistance of one or the other of the belligerents is certainly novel. It would, perhaps, have been nearer the truth had it been stated that it would be a departure from an attitude of strict partiality. As a matter of fact it is neutrals alone who can send medical aid to belligerents without let or hindrance. Indeed this principle is the *raison d'etre* of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies which have rendered help and assistance in the past. When advancing the plea the Government forgot that fifteen years ago they themselves had given passports to a similar mission sent to Turkey while Great Britain was neutral. It is futile to lodge protests but such set-backs should not deter us from persevering in our efforts.

NATIONAL HEALTH

I have taxed your patience by dwelling at such length on the problems of communal harmony and the unity of political parties for they are of the utmost importance for our national well-being at the present moment. There is, however, another subject which deserves the most serious attention of all those who have the love of India at heart. It might be urged that the problem of National Health, strictly speaking, does not fall within the purview of a political organisation and it is probably for this reason that it has, so far, not received that attention at the hands of the Indian National Congress which it deserves. It has such an important bearing on some of the most vital questions connected with the future of our people as a self-governing nation that I think it is high time the Congress realised its importance in our national economy and directed its attention towards it.

It does not require any great powers of observation to notice that there is a general deterioration in our health

which has become specially noticeable during the last fifty years. Without going into any elaborate details a mere comparison between the physique of a young man of the present generation and that of the young men of the past two generations will clearly establish the fact that there has been a steady decline. The men of the past two generations, perhaps less brainy, were comparatively more active, possessed greater power of endurance, were more courageous and less susceptible to disease. The contrast becomes more marked when we compare our level of general health with that of any other country in the West. If we examine the causes of this deficiency they would resolve themselves into climatic, social, economic, educational and hygienic.

In a tropical climate, where the heat during the greater part of the year is intense, there is greater general relaxation and quicker exhaustion of the system, hence, for the same number of hours of work a man is more fatigued in the tropics than in temperate and colder regions and yet the working day is longer in India than in the West. There being not enough rest or recreation the Indian worker has not much chance of recoupment while the drain on the system is kept up from day to day. This has a disastrous effect on the period of average life and on the standard of efficiency.

The evils of our peculiar social system are so well-known that it is not necessary for me to dilate upon them. Every work in the social cause knows the havoc played by seclusion and segregation of our female population, early marriages and rules confining the choice of marriage to a limited circle. The rigidity of the social rules affecting our domestic life is so cramping that it dwarfs the physical and mental growth of the family and has a particularly harmful influence on children. Nature is relentless in its revenge. If we defy the accepted laws of eugenics our common stock is bound to suffer.

The general economic condition of the workers in the fields and factories, who between themselves constitute

more than three-fourths of the total population of the country, is such that it is with difficulty that they can keep body and soul together. They are overworked and under-paid, ill-fed, ill-clothed and badly-housed. Their power of resistance to disease is so low that they fall easy victims to the ravages of epidemics. Cholera, plague, influenza, small-pox and malaria claim their heavy toll of millions year after year.

The growing evil of drink threatens further to undermine not only the public health of the country but our entire social structure. Forbidden by his religion to the Mussalman and held pernicious by the Hindu, the evil of drink would not have spread so rapidly and extensively had the Government taken a sympathetic attitude towards those who were endeavouring to stop it. On the contrary obstacles were placed in the way of national workers who wished to eradicate the evil and hundreds of young men who peacefully picketed liquor shops were sent to jail to pay the penalty of their reforming zeal. The arm of the law was used to "protect" the liberty of the citizen, to intoxicate others and to get intoxicated himself, in order to compensate him for the denial of liberty in the political sphere. Well might India complain "some are born drunkards, others contract the habit and some have drunkenness thrust upon them." The health of the nation may suffer, crime may increase, efficiency of the peasant and the labourer may decrease, their children may starve but Prohibition cannot be introduced as the deficiency in the budget must be balanced. Is it too much to expect the Government to meet the wishes of the people at least in this matter by finding other means to satisfy the requirements of a balanced budget ?

The conditions obtaining among the middle and the lower middle classes cause no less anxiety. With limited incomes and forced to maintain a higher standard of life in cities, where living is comparatively dearer, they suffer great hardship indeed. Their hand-to-mouth existence and consequent malnutrition together with residence in congested, unhealthy areas, make them

particularly susceptible to tuberculosis. The appalling figures of infant mortality and deaths during child-birth, both in rural and urban areas, are matters of great concern and deserve our immediate attention.

These evils are aggravated by a lack of proper provision for health and hygiene. There is much room for improvement in our general standard of cleanliness both in relation to the person and the household. Houses should be built with better provisions for ventilation and light and with satisfactory sanitary arrangements. Villages and towns should be planned with due regard to water supply, sanitation and conservancy arrangements. Stricter supervision of food-stuffs and better control of markets in every town and village, however small, is another crying need of the country. Medical relief should be organised on a wider scale. By these methods alone can we bring under control all preventable diseases and eradicate them finally.

The question of public health and hygiene is intimately correlated with that of mass education. Unless the mass-mind is prepared by a process of suitable education it can neither appreciate nor carry out the most elementary and essential reforms affecting the health and happiness of the masses. Our Municipalities and Local Boards, inspite of the many restrictions placed on their powers, can still do a great deal to arrest the decline in physique of the people and raise the general level of the health of the nation.

I have so far discussed the question of national health in its relation to our disabilities but making every allowance for them I cannot but deeply regret the general apathy and neglect shown towards the all-important question of physical culture. Even well-to-do people, who have both leisure and means, do not take much interest in it. This apathy was perhaps an inevitable result of the complete disarming of the nation and depriving its talents for military leadership. People were forced to rely on others for the defence of their homes and hearths. A spirit of dependence settled down on the nation. Old *akharas* and gymnasia disappeared and with them the spirit of self-reliance, the

very essence of national self-respect. Government shows a nervousness, difficult to appreciate, whenever the question is mooted that this emasculating general disarming of the people be put an end to and Indians given a chance to prepare themselves for the defence of their country. The fear that carrying of arms is likely to disturb the general peace and tranquillity, is entirely baseless. There have been fewer breaches of the peace in Indian States where there is no Arms Act, than in British India where even sticks beyond regulation size may not be carried. Establishment of gymnasia and centres of physical culture, in fact, the entire question of national health turns on Finance. Private efforts, however well-organised, cannot meet the needs of the situation. It is only by devoting a substantial portion of public revenues that such reforms of a real nation-building character can be taken in hand. Sixty per cent. of the revenues of India is absorbed by the Military Department in the name of the Defence of the country but the Government ought to know that there can be no defence of the country when people are allowed to exist in such a state of utter physical degeneration. The defence of the country does not lie in building costly block-houses and erecting fortifications, nor even in procuring expensive armament or the mechanisation of the Army. Money can make trenches but men alone can man them. The real defence of the country lies in tackling the problem of manhood and improving the general health of the nation.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I wish to urge that the country should lose no time in preparing itself for the next move forward. I urge that all our energies and resources be concentrated on fighting the enemy residing inside our body politic, namely, communal and political discord. I beseech Hindus and Mussalmans to accept the settlement of the Congress, which is just and fair to both, and to sink their differences. I press for an immediate and country-wide reorganisation of the Congress and cordially invite all communities and political parties to join the national organisation in a body in order to strengthen it and

make it truly representative and national. I appeal to all those who still desire to go to the Councils to close their ranks and form one People's Party of Opposition on the basis of the Congress Programme. I strongly advise the Congress and the country to stand aside and have nothing whatever to do with the Statutory Commission. I reiterate the demand of the Congress for a Round Table Conference of Indian and British representatives with plenipotentiary powers as the only method in which we could co-operate with Great Britain regarding the settlement of the future of India. I recommend the speedy preparation of the future Constitution of India and the calling of a National Convention for its adoption. I suggest to my people that we should consider Indian problems in their international setting and cultivate cultural relations and maintain friendly contact with Asiatic countries. I call upon my countrymen not to relax their efforts until they have secured the release of the detenues of Bengal and made repetition of a similar outrage on the elementary rights of citizenship impossible. I draw the attention of the country to the alarming condition of our National Health and earnestly appeal that effective measures be devised to check the causes which are leading to its steady deterioration. These, in my opinion, are the lines on which we can weld India into a nation with an irresistible will and determination to conquer all obstacles in the way of the realisation of its great Ideal and occupy its proper place among the Nations of the World.

Forty-third Congress—Calcutta—1928

PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU

FRIENDS,—I am deeply grateful to you for the honour you have done me in electing me to preside for a second time over this great national assembly. That honour, signal as it is, carries with it a burden which is none too light, and the bravest amongst us may well hesitate to shoulder it. You are well aware how I hesitated. But the exceeding kindness with which you have repeated your confidence in me has let me no choice but to bow to your will and to endeavour to shoulder, as best as I can, the heavy burden of guiding a great nation in its struggle for freedom. That very kindness also emboldens me to expect from you every indulgence and co-operation in the high task with which you have entrusted me.

Nine years ago I had the honour to preside over the National Congress. Martial Law with all its grim consequences and implications had just come and gone, and we were preparing for a great tussle with our alien rulers. That trial of strength came soon after and although we did not emerge victorious, the honours of war were with us and the promise of future victory was ours. The great giant, that is India, woke up for a while and the very awakening shook the foundations of British rule. There was a reaction and a relapse ; but again we see unmistakable signs of another and a greater awakening, and who will stop India in her forward stride when she is fully awake? Non-co-operation followed Dyerism and O'Dwyerism. Something perilously like these is again in the air, and again we are on the threshold of another great struggle for freedom.

In this struggle we shall unhappily miss many familiar faces, many trusty counsellors and gallant warriors who are no more. We shall miss Hakim Ajmal Khan and Lala Lajpat Rai whose death in the course of the year has deprived India in the moment of trial of two of her most trusted and valiant sons. Another ex-president who has passed away was Lord Sinha. Among other national workers who have gone I should like to mention specially Maganlal Gandhi, Gopabandhu Das and Andhraratna Gopal Krishnayya. On behalf of this Congress I offer its respectful condolence to the families of our departed colleagues.

I now proceed to place my views and suggestions before you on the immediate work before us. To prevent disappointment I must at the outset prepare you for a plain matter of fact statement from a plain matter of fact man of the world as it is, and not of the world as it should be. Let me warn you that you will be disappointed if you expect from me anything in the nature of high idealism presented in an attractive setting of word and phrase. Not that I deprecate idealism in the broader sense or am less convinced than anybody else of the supreme necessity of keeping the highest ideal in view, provided you try to live up to it. But pure idealism completely divorced from realities has no place in politics and is but a happy dream which must sooner or later end in a rude awakening. However high pitched the ideal may be, and the higher the better, the actual work to be done in the pursuit of that ideal must be guided solely by practical considerations. I am sure that we are all agreed upon that ideal though we give it different names. I am equally sure that we are all agreed upon the only way to achieve it. But the tragedy of it all is that we have so magnified our differences on what to my mind are non-essentials that we are unable to see the wood for the trees. These differences lie at the root of our failures, and are responsible for conflicting schools of thought which have rendered common action impossible. In my humble judgment the whole trouble is traceable to varying tendencies in the different schools to

over-rate some and under-rate other aspects of the situation. For instance there is one school of thought which exaggerates our weak points to such an extent as to feel utterly helpless in achieving anything except through the grace and good will of the very people who are oppressing and exploiting us. As against this there is the opposite school which takes little note either of our weak points or of the strength of the opposing forces and is ready to dash out full steam ahead on uncharted seas. It will be my humble endeavour to face the stern realities of the situation without blinking and then to suggest what seems to me to be the most suitable line of action for your acceptance.

It is, I take it, the duty of every man to help as far as it lies in his power to make his country fit to live in. But the actual process to be employed in bringing about the necessary change from what is to what should be, depends upon circumstances which cannot be the same in all countries and at all times. The essentials considered in the abstract are always the same, but concrete cases present peculiarities of their own to which no general rule or particular example is wholly applicable.

No two peoples in the world have started from exactly the same point or followed exactly the same course. Indeed the same people have had to change their course from time to time to suit the altered conditions of ever changing situations. We can always profit by the failure of others but seldom, if ever, by their success. The reason is obvious. It is easy to avoid mistakes made by others if we find ourselves in the same or similar predicament in which those mistakes were committed, but it is impossible to bring into existence the potent factors which made for success in some other country if those factors are entirely lacking in our own. The practical problem before us is to find out how under the conditions in which we live and with the materials at our disposal we can deliver the goods at the lowest cost of production. False analogies from other countries can only help to confuse the real issue.

To form a true idea of the work before us we have to answer three questions :

(1) Where do we stand ?
(2) What is our destination ? and
(3) How can we reach our destination ?

I shall endeavour to answer these questions to the best of my ability more from the practical than the dialectical point of view.

We have first to make sure of where we stand so as not to lose our bearings after we start. The point has a two-fold aspect—one in relation to the Government and the other in relation to ourselves. As to the former we all know that whatever political or civil rights we possess they are in the nature of a conditional gift enjoyable during the pleasure of our rulers. They can deprive us, and indeed have from time to time actually deprived thousands of us, of those rights at any moment with or without reason at their sweet will by using the vast reserve of arbitrary power which they retain in their own hands. I will not encumber this address by repeating an oft told tale. It is well known how the present Government has re-inforced and consolidated itself in the political and economic spheres by legislative, executive, and administrative action. It will serve no useful purpose to take you through the long list of repressive and oppressive measures which have been taken in India from the beginning of British rule down to the present day, or to remind you of how, after we were throughly crippled, the door to recovery was completely barred against us. We have been persistently denied all " opportunity for self-realisation, self-development, and self-fulfilment " for which Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das fought so valiantly in the closing years of his life. We have been scrupulously shut out of all effective part in the internal and external affairs of our own country.

The solemn promises of responsible government have found fulfilment in that colossal fraud, the Statutory Commis-

sion which is now careering along our streets leaving bleeding heads and broken bones behind. Nothing has so clearly brought out the cold callousness of the officials on the one hand, and the utter helplessness of the people to protect themselves on the other, as the progress of this Commission from town to town. To my mind the circumstances attending it are symptomatic of a grave organic infection and not merely of the well-known functional incapacity of the Government. It shows the presence of the toxin of Dyerism in their internal economy. The happenings at Lahore and Lucknow are only mild eruptions on the surface indicating the deep rooted disease within. We are indebted to the stupidity of the special correspondent of an English newspaper of Calcutta for a glimpse into the real mentality of the members of the Commission which may be taken as a faithful reflection of the mentality of the Government. He says :

> The Cawnpore scenes have apparently put the finishing touch on a psychic impression which the riotous scenes in Delhi had begun. Some of the Commissioners are making no secret of their indignation that such things should be permitted. I feel that if some of the Commisssioners had to write their report this week Lord Salisbury's famous prescription in another matter, 'twenty years of resolute government,' would recommend itself much more to their minds than any advance whatever.

So that the only way to achieve responsible Government for India is to fawn upon the great Commissioners and flatter them with a false declaration of confidence. And the surest way to invite " twenty years of resolute government " is to show your true feelings about the Commission. All I need say is that India will refuse to take responsible government as a reward for servility and will welcome " resolute government " ; but whether it will last for twenty years the future alone can decide. This prophet of evil has even dared to envisage the future. He proceeds to say :

> I seemed to sense a vision of realities stark and grim, and catch from the future the tramp of marching men.

These remarks were called forth by the grand boycott demonstration which greeted the Commissioners on their

arrival at Cawnpore. It is remarkable that while this correspondent was sending his inspired vision, the Police Superintendent of Cawnpore was writing to the organisers thanking them for the excellence of their arrangements and the absence of any untoward incident. That letter has, I believe, been published in the press. But the editor excelled the correspondent, as was befitting his superior position, by indulging in a particularly venomous attack, in the course of which he threatened resistance of the Indian demand for freedom to the "last ounce of ammunition." I am sure that if this editor and his correspondent had an ounce of discretion between them both, they would not have so easily given away official secrets. But we must thank them for their timely warning and assure them that we are ready. There can be nothing better than 'resolute government' at this juncture to bring matters to a head.

Our English friends affect to be shocked at these demonstrations. I should have ignored the foolish talk in which they have indulged but a responsible statement has recently been publicly made in this City on the subject by the Viceroy, and I feel that I cannot allow it to go unchallenged. However much one may regret untoward incidents, the right to hold peaceful demonstrations to give expression to strong public feeling has never been doubted. The demonstrations held after the return of the Commission to India have been characterised as "unmannerly and offensive." My answer is that such demonstrations must in their very nature be 'offensive' to those against whom they are made, and it is hardly reasonable to expect drawing room manners from a hostile crowd. The Viceroy has uttered two platitudes and a threat. The first platitude is: "However much those who organise such demonstrations may themselves deprecate violence they are, when it comes to the point, often quite incapable of controlling the forces they have excited." The second is: "those who deliberately embarked on a course so crude, so senseless and so dangerous, whatever the object they may mistakenly desire to serve, incur a very heavy responsibility."

The threat is that " it is the plain duty of Government to take whatever steps it deems necessary to prevent the recurrence of these discreditable incidents."

I agree with His Excellency on the first platitude and would also agree with him on the second if he could substitute the word " natural " for the words " crude and senseless." But both platitudes have no relation whatever to actual facts. As regards the threat it was anticipated by the English newspaper a week before ; it indicates an early materialisation of ' resolute government.' I have already dealt with the latter and have nothing further to add. In regard to the former, I have to point out that it has been established to our entire satisfaction by public statements of responsible Indian leaders, which no amount of departmental enquiry can controvert, that all the violence at these demonstrations was started by the Police, and attempts made by the people at one or two places to retaliate were speedily put down by their leaders. But if a stray missile struck a motor car, one of the occupants of which happened to be a lady, or some men in the large crowds came too near the great Commissioners and waved their black flags in close proximity to their highly respectable noses, is it a matter about which any undue fuss need be made ? I am sure that under similar circumstances worse things would have happened in England. I should like to put a few questions to those who have affected righteous indignation at the happenings at Lahore, Lucknow and Cawnpore. Those questions are :

(1) Would it be possible in any European country more specially in England for a commission of enquiry, which the people looked upon as a national insult, to travel in the comfort and safety enjoyed by Sir John Simon and his colleagues in India ?

(2) Would not all the silken flags and gold embroidered decorations such as were displayed in Butler Park have been torn to shreds and all the beautiful multi-coloured electric lamps, shining on them, smashed to pieces if any attempt were made in England to entertain publicly

men connected with a mission as highly unpopular among Englishmen as Sir John Simon and his colleagues are among Indians ?

(3) How would any Englishman like his house to be broken into, his guests treated to a sound thrashing and then arrested and imprisoned for a night for making a peaceful demonstration from his own terrace ?

(4) How would an Englishman like to be imprisoned in his own house, for however short a time, for holding opinions against the Government of the day ?

(5) How long would a government last in England which allowed the things mentioned in questions (3) and (4) to happen ?

We know that the house of the great nationalist nobleman of Oudh, the Maharaja of Mahmudabad, was surrounded with a cordon of police while his reactionary compeers were entertaining the Commission in a neighbouring park. The Maharaja, as is well-known, bravely stands for the boycott of the Commission and has refused to take part in any function given in its honour. Where is the liberty of the ordinary citizen when the premier baron of Oudh, a retired Home Member of the U. P. Government, decorated by it with the highest honours in its gift, can be imprisoned in his own house, simply because he holds an opinion disliked by the Government ? Is this anything very different from the "resolute government" foreshadowed by the Viceroy and the English newspaper. It has actually come upon since.

The recent murder of a police official at Lahore has provided an excuse to those whose minds are already made up, to forge new weapons to destroy the forces of nationalism. It need hardly be said that the crime is to be regretted. Congressmen, whether belonging to the school of independence or that of dominion status, stand, and have always stood, for a policy of strict non-violence and have given practical proof of the sincerity of their convictions on numerous occasions, including the recent incidents at

Lahore, Lucknow, Cawnpore and Patna. It is at present impossible to say whether the Lahore murder had a political significance. But assuming that it had, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the real responsibility for such incidents lies on the shoulders of the Government. History teaches us that incidents like these are symptomatic of a condition which can only be dealt with effectively by a wise and radical change of policy, and not by resort to coercive methods which defeat their own purpose and are resisted by the people with all the strength of which they are capable. But the bureaucracy has little use for lessons of history. The orgy of repression has already begun in the Punjab and is likely to extend at no distant date to the other provinces.

Forgive me for taking so much of your time over the Commission. It might well have been completely ignored, were it not for the direct bearing it has on the work before us. It is a portent of evil, but not without the good which comes out of all evil. It has shown us the fine courage of our men, specially the students, their serene coolness under the gravest provocation, their splendid stand against brutal *lathi* assaults with their own empty hands crossed on their chests, their gallant rescues of their comrades and leaders in utter disregard of the injuries inflicted on them. Let those who take this for cowardice try their "resolute government" and they will soon be disillusioned. They will have the satisfaction of shooting brave inoffensive men with their backs to the wall and chests bared to receive the bullets.

Let us now turn to the economic sphere. To have an adequate idea of the continuous exploitation to which we have been subjected, and of the enormous extent of the economic hold acquired by England over us by legislation and otherwise, it would be necessary to review the whole period of the British occupation of India. I shall however content myself by reminding you of a few historical facts the accuracy of which cannot be questioned. Besides maintaining the costliest civil and military services in the world at our expense, the solicitude of our trustees, as they

delight to call themselves, has been mainly directed to the creation of markets in India for England's manufactures. This laudable object has been achieved by a number of direct and indirect methods too numerous to be dealt with satisfactorily in the course of this address. It is a long story beginning from the days of the well-known barbarities committed on the Dacca artisans and continued through periods of more refined spoliation till we come to the present day powerful banking, commercial, and industrial combines which are now successfully choking off indigenous enterprise.

But by far the most important economic hold which the Government has acquired over the country by legislation and otherwise is through its manipulation of the currency. It will be tedious to go into the history of this highly technical question, but the fact is now admitted that the present depression in Indian commerce and industry, and the low buying power of the cultivator are due to the action of the Government in forcing up the rupee from 1*s.* 4*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* It has resulted in pinching the over-taxed cultivator of 12½ per cent. in the price of the raw materials produced by him, and giving a bonus of 12½ per cent. to the importer of foreign manufactures into India. If the Government had the interests of India at all in view, it would have reduced the land tax by 12½ per cent. and imposed an import duty of 12½ per cent. on all goods which can be manufactured in this country, including textile goods.

It was left to Sir George Godfrey of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to discover for the first time the other day that all the authentic records of India's prosperous trade and commerce before the advent of the British were pure legends. In the course of an utterance at the last meeting of the Associated Chamber of Commerce attacking everything Indian, he justified the British exploitation of India using fiction for fact. He said "If Lancashire is accused of devastating India, Lancashire has equally devastated the English countryside." What a comparison! I presume Sir George Godfrey is in possession

of some history of England unknown for the rest of the world which records the fact that the weavers of the English countryside were subjected to the pains and penalties that were inflicted, as proved by European witnesses, on Indian weavers by the East India Company, that the English countryside was compelled to buy Lancashire cloth in the place of home-spun; and the further fact that a Cotton Excise Duty was imposed on Lancashire textile while foreign goods were imported free of duty.

His reference to Indian shipping betrays the same fondness for fiction as his reference to textile does—for facts I must refer you and him to the excellent literature that Mr. Haji has published on his harmless and timely bill. Indian shipping was as deliberately sacrificed for the English interest as was India's greatest cottage industry. Now that a belated bill is before the legislature seeking somewhat to stop the continuance of the grave wrong done to Indian shippers by the English monopoly, the monopolists accuse us of attempting racial discrimination and pass a resolution demanding that the legislature shall not have the power to pass that bill.

Not content with distorting history this English merchant prince almost hit below the belt when he suggested that the framers of the draft constitution now before the country had sought to disfranchise Britishers. It was his duty before he brought so grave a charge against responsible men to make sure of his facts. He should have known that as soon as the Committee discovered that there was a possibility of a doubt they removed it in their supplementary report which was before the country days before Sir George Godfrey delivered his oration.

It will be clear from what I have said above that the process of forging new chains to keep us in prepetual bondage has gone on simultaneously with a long protracted, ruthless exploitation of our material resources. While, however, the Government has to answer for a great deal, it must be frankly confessed that we cannot honestly acquit

ourselves of all blame for our present plight. The strength or weakness of a nation depends upon the strength or weakness of the tie which keep its component parts together. In our case this tie has not for centuries been very strong and with the march of the new order of things has lost much of what binding force it ever had. There is no overlooking the fact that we are divided into a number of large and small communities, more or less disorganised and demoralised. The Government is undoubtedly responsible for the prevailing ignorance and poverty among the masses and in a very large measure for the growing hostility among the classes. But it certainly is not to blame for the evils of our own social system, which has relegated millions of our people as good as ourselves, to the category of untouchables and depressed classes, and has put our women under restrictions which deprive them not only of many natural rights but also of the opportunity to render national service. Nor is the Government solely accountable for all the communal differences which have contributed a dark chapter to the recent history of our own times.

The Committee of the All-Parties' Conference has dealt fully in its report with the communal problem in India. It has offered a solution which I trust this Congress will accept. The problem before us however is a wider and more fundamental one than a mere adjustment of communal differences. It is: what place, if any, religion, as practised and understood to-day, should occupy in our public life?

Whatever the higher conception of religion may be, it has in our day-to-day life come to signify bigotry and fanaticism, intolerance and narrow-mindedness, selfishness and the negation of many of the qualities which go to build a healthy society. Its chief inspiration is hatred of him who does not profess it, and in its holy name more crimes have been committed than for any professedly mundane object. Can any sane person consider the trivial and ridiculous causes of conflict between Hindu and Moslem, or between sect and sect and not wonder how any one with a grain of sense should be affected by them?

The aim of all education and progress is to develop the collective instinct in man; to teach him to co-operate with his neighbour; and to make him feel that this individual good depends on the good of society as a whole. Only thus can the selfish and individualistic instincts be suppressed and the energy of mankind be diverted from mutual competition to co-operation for the common good. Religion as practised to-day is, however, the greatest separatist force. It puts artificial barriers between man and man and prevents the development of healthy and co-operative national life. Not content with its reactionary influences on social matters, it has invaded the domain of politics and economics, and affects every aspect of our life. Its association with politics has been to the good of neither. Religion has been degraded and politics has sunk into the mire. Complete divorce of one from the other is the only remedy.

But this is not all. A strange fatality has been pursuing our political activities from a very early stage. We have never been entirely free from serious differences amongst those who have taken up the patriotic duty of liberating their country in right earnest and have not winced at any sacrifice in discharging it to the best of their ability. These differences have inevitably set back the hands of the clock and opened the door to disruptive forces. There have been serious splits among the leaders which have spread with lightning rapidity to the rank and file on almost every occasion when a forward move has been taken or even contemplated. We would do well to profit by the lesson of the past lest the inexorable fate which has been pursuing us for the last 20 years or more overtake us again. It is close upon our heels already in the garb of socialism and will devour both complete independence and dominion status if you let it approach nearer.

The brief outline I have given above will show that we stand at present in the thickest part of the wood. We suffer from two sets of serious disabilities—those imposed upon us by foreign rule and those of our own making. It is difficult to stand against the foreigner without offering

him a united front. It is not easy to offer a united front while the foreigner is in our midst domineering over us.

The two sets of disabilities together form a vicious circle around us and we stand in the centre, heavily handicapped by one in trying to get rid of the other. We have to break through the vicious circle before we can hope to be out of the wood.

This is my answer to the question—where do we stand?

The second question is: what is our destination?

My answer straight and simple is *freedom* in substance, and not merely in form, by whatever name you call it. The Madras Congress has declared the goal as complete independence. The All-Parties' Committee has recommended Dominion Status. I have explained my position more than once but with your permission I shall re-state it here as clearly as I can. To put it in a nutshell it comes to this: I am for complete independence—as complete as it can be—but I am not against full Dominion Status—as full as any dominion possesses it to-day—provided I get it before it loses all attraction. I am for severence of British connection as it subsists with us to-day but am not against it as it exists with the Dominions.

Let me explain. National freedom unrestricted and unqualified is the natural craving of the human soul. I do not believe that there is a single Indian, be he or she a member of a party or group, or one completely detached from all parties and groups, who does not love freedom or will not have it. Differences arise only when the question is raised whether it is possible to have and to keep freedom; and it is then that we find opinion sharply divided. There are those who have the faith in them and in their countrymen to answer the question by an emphatic "yes"—and I may at once say that I am one of them. But there are also those who will shake their heads, some from conviction and others in doubt. Complete independence is the goal of the former, dominion status that of the latter. I will not undertake a fruitless enquiry into the relation or want

of relation between independence and dominion status. It does not matter to me whether theoretically they belong to the same or different stocks, or whether one is or is not the negation of the other. What matters to me is that dominion status involves a very considerable measure of freedom bordering on complete independence. I am therefore not against an exchange of our abject dependence with whatever measure of freedom there is in full dominion status if such exchange is offered. But I cannot make dominion status my goal as it has to come from another party over whom I have no control. The only way I can acquire such control is by working in right earnest for complete independence. I say 'in right earnest' because I know mere bluff will not take me far; it is only when complete independence is in sight that the party in power will be inclined to negotiate for something less. Empty bluff will not carry us to that stage. Solid work and ungrudging sacrifice alone will do it. When that work is done, and sacrifice made, the party having the whip hand will dictate. Whether it is to be dominion status or complete independence will depend upon whether the conditions then prevailing are similar to those of Ireland or to those of the United States of America at the time when each came into what she now has. Meanwhile, there is nothing before us but a protracted life-and-death struggle on the one side, and continued repression relieved by an occasional dose of undiluted oppression on the other. It follows therefore that, whatever the ultimate goal, we must be prepared to traverse the same thorny path to reach it. If we are not so prepared, independence will ever be an idle dream and dominion status an ever receding will-o'-the wisp.

I must here notice another part of the Viceroy's speech from which I have already quoted. He draws a dark picture of the damage that India is "likely to suffer at the hands of its false friends who would guide it towards the morass of independence." The description of 'independence' as a 'morass' is rather original. It would be more correct to say that we have to cross a

morass before we arrive at independence. But the morass surrounds us on all sides and we can arrive nowhere except by crossing it. That being so our friends who support the movement say: why not make for independence pure and unadulterated which depends upon your own effort, however long and arduous, instead of floundering in the direction of dominion status which depends upon the good will of Britain. They argue that it will be sheer waste of time, energy, and sacrifice first to struggle in the morass for dominion status and when you find your way barred then to bungle back to the starting point and plunge again into the same morass to struggle for independence. From Lord Irwin's point of view this argument is unanswerable. From my point of view dominion status is passed on the way to independence, and if it is refused you have simply to press on to your destination which must always be independence. Lord Irwin's argument based on loyalty to the Crown can easily be overstressed. Loyalty is a fine thing but the strain it can bear is not unlimited.

But it is obvious that independence does not mean walking out of the world. If you continue to live in it you must come across others who also live in the same world. It is neither necessary nor possible for the existence of an independent state in the present day world conditions to cut off all political, economic, and social relations with other states. Indeed the more independent you are, the more necessary it will be to establish relations all round. When, therefore, we talk of the severence of the British connection we do not mean a cessation of all relations, but such appropriate change in existing relations as is necessary to transform a dependency into a free state. The extent of the change will depend upon the extent of freedom we achieve. If it is dominion status, the change, as it is now well understood, will be from a dependency to 'an autonomous nation, free and equal member of the British Commonwealth of Nations.' If, however, it is complete independence, India will stand out of the British Commonwealth of Nations and the nature of her relations with Great Britain will be determined by treaty and

mutual understanding. In either case, some connection with other nations including the British must subsist if we mean to take an active part in shaping our own future and that of the world.

Mahatma Gandhi, presiding at the Belgaum Congress, said :

> In my opinion, if the British Government mean what they say and honestly help us to equality, it would be a greater triumph than a complete severence of the British connection. I would therefore strive for Swaraj within the Empire but would not hesitate to sever all connection if severence became a necessity through Britain's own fault. I would thus throw the burden of separation on the British people.

This was four years ago. Much water has since flown under the bridges. We have striven and striven hard for Swaraj within the Empire, but the British people have not so far shown any inclination to help us honestly to equality. All the indications have been to the contrary. Indeed responsible British statesmen have repeatedly declared that full dominion status is yet a far cry. I therefore fully sympathise with those who have exhausted their patience and have now raised the cry of complete separation. But let us fully grasp the meaning of Mahatma Gandhi. I am sure he never meant that the moment we felt sure that Britain was not going to give us dominion status we were to declare for independence irrespective of our own readiness to enforce it. He was, to my mind, referring to the time when we acquired what I have described as the whip hand. The time admittedly has not arrived.

In the same address, Mahatmaji said :—

> The better mind of the world desires to-day not absolutely independent states warring one against another but a Federation of friendly inter-dependent states. The consummation of that event may be far off. I want to make no grand claim for our country. But I see nothing grand or impossible about our expressing our readiness for universal inter-dependence rather than independence. It should rest with Britain to say that she will have no real alliance with India.

And then comes the pregnant passage which I earnestly commend to your very serious consideration. It runs thus :—

I desire the ability to be totally independent without asserting the independence. Any scheme that I would frame while Britain declares her goal about India to be complete equality within the Empire would be that of an alliance and not of independence without alliance.

So far as Britain's formal declaration of her goal about India is concerned, it is complete equality within the Empire. The scheme prepared by the All Parties Committee and adopted by the Conference is therefore in full accord with Mahatmaji's views.

The truth is that we cannot get anything from England except by proving our strength. The way to acquire that strength is to organise ourselves and our resources. Such organisation is as necessary for those who desire dominion status as it is for those who work for complete independence. That being so the obvious course is to work together up to the point the weakest of us is ready to go. If he is not disillusioned by the time we reach that point, let us leave him there and forge ahead.

I must here ease the minds of those who fear that the moment dominion status is granted to us, we shall use it to throw off British connection altogether. In the speech from which I have already quoted, Lord Irwin said :

Those in Great Britain who sympathise most warmly with the ideal of India attaining at the earliest possible moment the status of any of the other great Dominions of the Crown, will find the ground cut from their feet if British opinion ever becomes convinced, as some apparently are now endeavouring to convince it, that so-called Dominion Status was only valued by India as a stepping-stone to a complete severence of her connection with the British Commonwealth.

There is no foundation for this apprehension and there is no reason whatever why we should seek complete severence of British connection if we are put on terms of perfect equality with the Dominions. If we are not put on such terms it will not be dominion status ; we will not take a colourable imitation. It must therefore be clearly understood that dominion status has to be offered and accepted with all its implications, its rights and obligations, which both parties will be in honour bound to respect and

uphold. But as Mahatmaji has put it, we "would not hesitate to sever all connection, if severence became necessary through Britain's own fault." It is conceivable that we may be driven to separation by the treatment accorded to us by Britain herself, and in that case we shall have precisely the same remedy as the dominions now have.

It will, I hope, now be clear why I say that I am for complete independence and at the same time not against dominion status, if the latter comes without avoidable delay. It is impossible to say which of the parties will have the whip hand at the psychological moment. Great Britain has the whip hand to-day, and the psychological moment for her to offer, and for India to accept, full dominion status, has arrived. If Great Britain will not avail herself of the opportunity India will have the whip hand to-morrow, and then will come the psychological moment for her to wrest complete independence from Great Britain. No offer of dominion status will then be acceptable.

Objection is taken to the preparation of any scheme of government on dominion lines by us on the ground that it is for Britain, and not India to make the offer. It is pointed out that those who enjoy dominion status did not fight for it but achieved it in the course of their struggle for complete independence, the offer having come from Great Britain. I am quite clear in my own mind that substantially the same process will have to be repeated in India if we are ever to have dominion status, and as I have already pointed out, we cannot reasonably accept it unless complete independence is in sight. But I cannot understand why it is not open to us to offer terms to Great Britain, as much as it is open to her to offer terms to us. If the offer is honourable to those who make it as well as to those who accept it, it does not matter to me who is the proposer and who the acceptor. I do not believe that we have among the soldiers of independence a more fearless and selfless patriot and a greater fighter for the freedom of India than Deshabandu Chittaranjan Das was. Let me

recall to your minds the great speech he delivered at Faridpore in which he said that all he needed was a full and fair opportunity for self-realisation, self-development and self-fulfilment. He did not hesitate to make an offer of full co-operation to the bureaucracy if it would only afford that opportunity, show a real change of heart, and guarantee "Swaraj in the fullest sense to come automatically in the near future." That offer was no sign of weakness. It was made in the full consciousness of strength. "If," he declared, "our offer of settlement should not meet with any response we must go on with our national work on the lines which we have pursued for the last two years so that it may become impossible for the Government to carry on the administration of the country except by the exercise of its exceptional powers. . . . and when the time comes we shall not hesitate to advise our countrymen not to pay taxes which are sought to be raised by the exercise of their exceptional powers."

Those were the words of a statesman, a political philosopher and a determined fighter for liberty—a man who believed in the doctrine of self-reliance which he preached. It was not beneath his dignity to offer a settlement while he was preparing for a great fight. As a matter of fact, Britain has already made an offer of a kind in the most solemn manner she could, by embodying it in the preamble of the Government of India Act. It is true that this offer is utterly inadequate and wholly unacceptable. The proper course is to make a counter offer. This is what the All Parties Committee has done.

A good deal has been said about developing sanctions. On this point I am content to quote Mahatma Gandhi. Commenting on the All Parties Committee's Report, he said in *Young India*:

> There is still much diplomatic work to be done. But more than the diplomatic work is that of forging the sanction. Pandit Jawharlal Nehru truly observed that whether it was Dominion Status or Independence, a proper sanction would be necessary if the national demand was to be enforced. Bardoli has shown the way, if the sanction has to be non-violent. The Congress creed has

non-violence as its integral part. There is no denying the fact that non-violence had receded in the background before Bardoli. But even as the Nehru report has made an unanimous demand possible, Bardoli has brought back the vanishing faith in non-violence. If, then, we are sure of the sanction, we need not worry whether Swaraj is otherwise spelt Dominion Status or Independence. Dominion Status can easily become more than Independence, if we have sanction to back it. Independence can easily become a farce if it lacks sanction. What is in a name if we have the reality? A rose smells just as sweet whether you know it by that name or any other. Let us therefore make up our minds as to whether it is to non-violence or violence and let the rank and file work for the sanction in real earnest even as the diplomats must work at constitution-making.

I have now given my answer to the second question I formulated. It is:

Our destination is Freedom, the form and extent of which will depend upon the time when, and the circumstances under which, it comes.

Meanwhile there is nothing for us but to do the work necessary for all forms and all degrees of freedom. That work is one and the same and I now proceed to consider it.

It must be remembered that the same Congress which declared complete independence as our goal, by another resolution invited all parties to confer with its Working Committee to devise a constitution for India based on common agreement. It was then as obvious as it is now that no party outside the Congress was prepared to set its goal as high as complete independence from the point of view of its own conception of practical politics. The Congress must therefore be taken to have embarked upon the enquiry with full knowledge of this fact. What then was the object of directing the Working Committee to call an All Parties Conference or Convention if complete independence was not merely the goal but the next immediate step? It certainly was not for the mere fun of it. The importance of the Convention and the political value of its agreed conclusions are quite obvious and must have been so to the Congress when it passed the resolution. But the Congress could not, at the time, have any clear conception as to what the next step would be after the All

Parties Convention came to decisions. That would depend upon the extent of agreement reached and the nature of the decisions arrived at which could not then be known.

The Working Committee has faithfully carried out the instructions of the Madras Congress and called the All Parties Conferences. The remarkable success of these national gatherings, in their endeavour to find the highest common basis for a constitution for India, is well known. Never before, in the history of our public movements, so many organisations—political, labour, religious, communal, and commercial—as took part in those gatherings have come together on one and the same platform. There can be no doubt that the credit of this great achievement—perhaps the greatest since the day of Non-Co-operation—belongs to the Congress which conceived the idea, and more specially to Dr. Ansari, the President of the Congress, who never spared himself in carrying it out. The resolutions of the National Convention will come up before you in the course of this session. You will have all the materials before you and it will be your solemn duty to discharge the obligation inherited from the Madras Congress to determine the next step. You have succeeded to the great asset left by the Congress—the goal of complete independence. You cannot shirk its liability. The future will depend largely on the manner in which you discharge that liability.

The recommendations of the main and the supplementary Reports of the Committee appointed by the All Parties Conference are all based on the principle of the highest common agreement. That principle I earnestly commend to this Congress for its acceptance. The Congress is in itself an All Parties Conference and it is its duty to deal with every question coming before it from the point of view of the greatest good of all the parties and the people of India. So far the Congress has been discharging this duty on its own initiative, taking upon itself the responsibility of determining what is good for the people and regulating its policy accordingly. This is the first time in the history of the Congress that it invited the people of India through the various organisations representing them,

to determine for themselves what is good for them. In doing so the Congress has acted on the principle of self-determination. Those invited have accepted the invitation of the Congress as they never did before—no, not even in the palmy days of Non-Co-operation—when with all the millions behind it, the Congress was not supported by many well known organisations. There is not one organisation—political, social, religious, communal, commercial, industrial or labour—of any note or standing to-day which did not take part in the All Parties Conferences and the National Convention or which, having so taken part, has not given up much that it valued for the sake of unity. It is an achievement of which any country in the world might well be proud. That achievement will now be presented to you. Will you accept it or spurn it? If you have any faith in your claim for self-determination, you have no right to spurn it even if you disagree. The only question is, whether there is such a consensus of agreement on the scheme that it can be treated as self determined. I say there is. The only dissentients are a few communalists. As regards them, I must say frankly that I do not understand them and am unable to reconcile their claim for special communal advantages with their desire for complete independence. Some of these would reserve to a handful the right to arrest the whole course of the country's legislation. Others are prepared to go back even on joint electorates if a few additional seats are not given to them in the legislatures. Their dissent with a scheme of dominion status can hardly be taken seriously.

I have commented adversely on the speech of the Viceroy delivered in this city recently, but I think I owe it to His Excellency to express my appreciation of another part of the same speech which is germane to the point I am discussing. He said :

> There is no use pretending that the different classes, the different communities, the different races in India will not have different standards, but in such disagreement there is nothing unhealthy or unnatural. If interests clash it does not mean that one set of interests is to be swept away or that one community need smother its individuality to suit the whole. Each has its own good

qualities, its own ideals to pursue, its own rights to maintain but each should be capable of self-realsation in its own sphere and at the same time taking its own place in the whole scheme of National life.

I heartily endorse this sentiment but am not quite sure that His Excellency and I are not at cross purposes. I claim that the Report of the All Parties Committee allows ample scope to every community to pursue its own ideals and affords it ample opportunity for "realisation in its own sphere" and at the same time gives to each " its own place in the whole scheme of national life." I have however a shrewd suspicion that Lord Irwin does not mean the same thing. But let me proceed.

Apart from the principle of self determination the only other criterion by which you can judge the All Parties Scheme is real and lasting good of the country. Spurn it, by all means, if you honestly think that it is not for the real and lasting good of the country and only offers a temporary advantage, at the sacrifice of the ultimate goal. But do not spurn it, merely because it conflicts with theories and dogmas which have no relation to the living facts of the situation.

Neither ths authors of the recommendations nor the Conferences which have adopted them, have put them forward as a counsel of perfection. Speaking for myself and my colleagues on the Committee, I can say that there is not one of us who, left to himself, would have produced the identical report which, acting together we have considered it our duty to make. There are points on which our recommendations run counter to the settled convictions of every one of us, as for instance reservation of seats for minorities. We were, however, compelled to recommend such reservation by the exigencies of the situation.

The one question, therefore, that this Congress has to answer is, whether these recommendations and resolutions, taken as a whole, are so utterly outrageous, so thoroughly inconsistent, with the real and lasting good of the country, that it is its duty to reject them, in spite of the consensus

of opinion in the country behind them. If they are not, this Congress has no option but to accept them.

It will be observed that the recommendations are divisible under two main heads—general and communal. Both are so inter-related that you cannot accept the one and reject the other. We cannot overlook the Lucknow resolution, whereby all parties agreed that "every one of them will stand by it (the Report) as a whole and will refuse to accept any single part of it without giving full force and effect to all other parts." There are communal and politico-communal organizations which favour dominion status and have not only joined the communal agreements as parties, but given up what they considered substantial rights for the sake of an agreed constitution. Many hundreds of public meetings have been held throughout the country, attended by people of all shades of opinion, which have approved of the recommendations as a whole. It is impossible to say how many accepted the communal solution because of the draft constitution for dominion status, and how many accepted the latter because of the former. We have to keep our faith with all. The course suggested is therefore not open to the Congress. It has either to accept both, the communal solution and the dominion status, recommended by the Conferences, without prejudice to its goal of complete independence, or to scrap the whole scheme.

The position, as I view it, is this. Here is a constitution agreed upon by the various parties, invited by the Congress to frame it. These parties know that the goal of the Congress is complete independence. They do not ask the Congress to change its goal, but present to it the result of their labours such as it is, and say that they are prepared to go thus far and no further at present. They offer their co-operation and demand that of the Congress, to enable both to reach the point up to which they are prepared to go. After that point is reached they reserve liberty to themselves and to the Congress to consider the next step. Is the Congress

going to refuse them this co-operation and this liberty? Is the Congress after bringing them together going to send them back to the wilderness in isolated groups, each to shift for itself, and leave the Congress to wrangle over the respective merits of complete independence and dominion status to the end of time? If the Congress will do that, it will abdicate its proper function to guide the nation on its forward march. The occasion calls for skilful generalship, and not academic discussions which take us nowhere. The nation is knocking at your door. You must open it wide—wide enough for every one to enter, or lose your rightful place of high command. My advice to you is to accept the offer. If you do so the way to your destination is clear.

Begin at the point at which the All Parties Conference have now arrived and push forward with them as far as they would go, then pause and take stock of your equipment, and finally throw the strength of your whole being into one great effort to reach the goal.

That is my answer to the question : how can we reach our destination ?

The first, and the most obvious step is to set our own house in order. For this purpose, rally all the parties under the banner of the Congress and prepare to march shoulder to shoulder with them to the farthest end of the common road. That will be the first part of the arduous journey. I suggest the following programme for it :

1. Popularising the communal solution, agreed to at the All Parties Conferences, in the country, by intensive propaganda in the press and on the platform and organising village to village lectures.

2. Organising similar propaganda in regard to the resolutions of the Delhi Unity Conference and the Madras Congress, with such improvements as this Congress might make on communal matters, other than those dealt with by the Conferences.

3. Work among the untouchables and depressed classes.

4. Organisation of labour, agricultural and industrial.

5. Other village organisations.

6. Popularising khaddar and boycott of foreign cloth.

7. Campaign against social customs which retard social intercourse and national growth, more especially crusade against the *purdah* and the other disabilities of women.

8. Intensive campaign against the drink and opium curse.

9. Publicity.

It will be observed that this is a predominantly social programme. I claim no orginality for any of its items and have merely selected them out of a long list which, with the exception of the first item, has been before the Congress and the country for years past. I may, however, be pardoned when I say that we have so far not done much worth speaking in carrying out the constructive work. Commonplace as this programme may appear, it is the only true foundation on which the hopes of the high priests of complete independence, as well as those of the votaries of dominion status, can be safely built. To the former I say, that the measure of their capacity, for the tremendous sacrifice that the first real step towards their goal will demand is the measure of their success in carrying out this seemingly unpretentious programme. To the latter I say, that the only chance there is of dominion status being ever offered to them lies in the complete fulfilment of this very programme.

Large sums of money and organised work throughout the country are necessary if we are to set about the business in right earnest. It is not merely the business of any particular organisation or individual, but of all organisations and all individuals in the country who have the least desire to attain any measure of freedom. Among those who took part in the Convention there were the representatives of all

interests in the country—there were the wealthy, the well-to-do, and the poor. Let the wealthy give of their abundance, the well-to-do of their savings, and the poor of their pittance. Let the Indian Princes, great and small, come forward with munificent donations, and give practical proof of the great solicitude they profess for the general well-being of their country. In the social part of the programme all can join including Government servants. But will the Government let them? This is the acid test of the honesty of the pious intentions and wishes expressed by British statesmen in England and India. Let the Government, if it honestly means what it professes, publicly declare that the Indian Princes, the Indian commercial and industrial magnates, the great Zamindars, and Government servants have full liberty to help the social work in every way possible. Let there be no secret instructions to the contrary in sealed covers or in cipher, circulated at the same time. Let the English Banks undertake that they will not turn away Indian commercial and industrial concerns from their door if they subscribe to this fund. Let these three things be done, and I shall see that enough money is forthcoming within a very short time for the full fruition of this programme.

But we Congressmen need not depend upon the pious wishes and intentions of the British bureaucracy and those who are interested in maintaining it in power. The real work has to be done by Congressmen with the help of the progressive parties in the country.

I shall now examine the various items of the programme in relation to Congressmen.

Items 1 and 2 need no explanation. It will be observed that I have confined these items to the communal part of the recommendations as to which there is, and should be, no difference of opinion among us. The vital importance of the work is obvious.

As to untouchability, a great deal has been said but very little work has been done. It should, in my opinion, be the duty of every Congressman to help actively in this

work to the best of his ability. Untouchability must be abolished altogether, so far as Congressmen are concerned, and no person who refuses to associate with untouchables as his equals should be permitted to belong to any Congress organisation. The All-India Spinners' Association is doing good work in both directions but it needs further support and its work should be supplemented by lectures on sanitation and formation of village and circle committees to promote co-operation among the villagers.

No. 6 is the special province of the women of India and I call upon them to offer their services to the Congress.

The campaign against social customs which retard social intercourse and national growth is essential for the success of any programme but we have so far paid the least attention to it. The *purdah* and the other disabilities of women are a curse we should wipe out without delay. If woman is the better half of man, let us men assist them to do the better part of the work of national uplift. To get rid of *purdah* and to reorganise domestic life, no money is wanted. Every individual can and should do his bit.

It is impossible to enter into further details in the course of this address and I would suggest that the All-India Congress Committee be empowered to divide itself into a number of sub-committees, each to be presided over by a member of the Working Committee, and to be in charge of one or more of the above items. The actual work will be done by similar sub-committees of the Provincial Committees who will look for instructions to the sub-committee of the All-India Congress Committee in charge. All other details will be left to the Working Committee.

This is the general programme for all parties to carry out. It is as necessary from their point of view as that of the Congress, and I have reason to believe that they will give their full support. If we all do this work honestly and intensively the goal should be within sight. But if we are unable to work out this programme to the full measure expected, whether we retain the support of the other parties

or not, for Congressmen non-violent non-co-operation is an obligation they dare not shirk unless there is a better aggressive programme before the Congress. Sirdar Vallabhai Patel and Bardoli have shown us that absolutely peaceful direct action is possible and can be made successful. He has shown what patient work among vilagers can do. In your name, I tender my congratulations to the Sirdar and his brave comrades—men as well as women.

We may not forget our countrymen overseas. Though the great work done by Mr. V. S. Sastri has eased the situation to a certain extent in South Africa, the position requires considerable watching. The problem in Kenya is growing more and more serious and threatens the very existence of the Indian settlers there who, by the way, went there long before any European had enjoyed the happiest relations with the Africans. In Fiji and British Guiana too the pressure of the British exploitation is telling upon our countrymen who have gone there, as much as upon the natives of the soil. But without forgetting them, the best aid we can render them is in the words of Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, to gain our freedom here.

I have only dealt with what I consider to be the real crux of the present situation and in doing so I have tried to discharge what I conceive to be my duty to the country at this juncture. My views may not be acceptable to all, specially to the younger men. I quite appreciate their impatience. We need both patience and impatience. Patience with those who differ from us, impatience with ourselves. I have no quarrel with the ideals of the younger men nor with the practical work they have laid out for themselves. I hold with them that all exploitation must cease and all imperialism must go. But the way to do it is a long and dreary one. They know it and have themselves pointed it out. The work before the young and the old is one and the same. Only the mentality is different. Let the younger men by all means preserve their own mentality, but let them not, for the sake of the very Motherland they seek to serve, divide the country into

more factions and parties than there are already. To the older men I repeat the same advice. Let them both remember the words of wisdom uttered by Mahatma Gandhi and Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das I have quoted above. The masses want bread. They have no time to make experiments and no use for theories and dogmas imported from abroad.

I have done. You have been patient with me. My humble services for what they are worth are at your disposal. Let us sink our differences. Let us march forward shoulder to shoulder and victory is ours.

Bande Mataram.

Forty-fourth Congress—Lahore—1929

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

COMRADES,—For four and forty years this National Congress has laboured for the freedom of India. During this period it has somewhat slowly, but surely, awakened national consciousness from its long stupor and built up the national movement. If, to-day we are gathered here at a crisis of our destiny, conscious of our strength as well as of our weakness, and looking with hope and apprehension to the future, it is well that we give first thought to those who have gone before us and who spent out their lives with little hope of reward, so that those that followed them may have the joy of achievement. Many of the giants of old are not with us and we of a later day, standing on an eminence of their creation, may often decry their efforts. That is the way of the world. But none of you can forget them or the great work they did in laying the foundations of a free India. And none of us can ever forget that glorious band of men and women who, without reckoning the consequences, have laid down their young lives or spent their bright youth in suffering and torment in utter protest against a foreign domination. Many of their names even are not known to us. They laboured and suffered in silence without any expectation of public applause, and by their heart's blood they nursed the tender plant of India's freedom. While many of us temporised and compromised, they stood up and proclaimed a people's right to freedom and declared to the world that India, even in her degradation, had the spark of life in her, because she refused to submit to tyranny and serfdom. Brick by brick has our national movement been built up, and often on the prostrate bodies of her martyred sons has India advanced. The

giants of old may not be with us, but the courage of old is with us still and India can yet produce martyrs like Jatindradas and Wijaya.

This is the glorious heritage that we have inherited and you wish to put me in charge of it! I know well that I occupy this honoured place by chance more than by your deliberate design. Your desire was to choose another—one who towers above all others in this present day world of ours—and there could have been no wiser choice. But fate and he conspired together and thrust me against your will and mine into this terrible seat of responsibility. Should I express my gratitude to you for having placed me in this dilemma? But I am grateful indeed for your confidence in one who strangely lacks it himself.

CHANGING WORLD

You will discuss many vital national problems that face us to-day and your decision may change the course of Indian history. But you are not the only people that are faced with the problem. The whole world to-day is one vast question-mark and every country and every people is in the melting pot. The age of faith, with the comfort and stability it brings, is passed and there is question about everything, however permanent or sacred it might have appeared to our forefathers. Everywhere there is doubt and restlessness and the foundations of the State and Society are in process of transformation. Old established ideas of liberty, justice, property and even the family are being attacked and the outcome hangs in the balance. We appear to be in a dissolving period of history when the world is in labour and out of her travail will give birth to a new order.

INDIA'S PART

No one can say what the future will bring, but we may assert with some confidence that Asia and even India, will play a determining part in future world policy. The brief day of European domination is already approaching its end. Europe has ceased to be the centre of activity

and interest. The future lies with America and Asia. Owing to false and incomplete history many of us have been led to think that Europe has always dominated over the rest of the world, and Asia has always let the legions of the West thunder past and had plunged in thought again. We have forgotten that for millennia the legions of Asia overran Europe and modern Europe itself largely consists of the descendants of these invaders from Asia. We have forgotten that it was India that finally broke the military power of Alexander. Thought has undoubtedly been the glory of Asia and specially of India, but in the field of action the record of Asia has been equally great. But none of us desires that the legions of Asia or Europe should overrun the continents again. We have all had enough of them.

India to-day is a part of a world movement. Not only China, Turkey, Persia and Egypt but also Russia and the countries of the West are taking part in this movement, and India cannot isolate herself from it. We have our own problems—difficult and intricate—and we cannot run away from them and take shelter in the wider problems that affect the world. But if we ignore the world, we do so at our peril. Civilisation to-day, such as it is, is not the creation or monopoly of one people or nation. It is a composite fabric to which all countries have contributed and then have adapted to suit their particular needs. And if India has a message to give to the world as I hope she has, she has also to receive and learn much from the messages of other peoples.

SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

When everything is changing it is well to remember the long course of Indian history. Few things in history are more amazing than the wonderful stability of the social structure in India which withstood the impact of numerous alien influences and thousands of years of change and conflict. It withstood them because it always sought to absorb them and tolerate them. Its aim was not to exterminate, but to establish an equilibrium between different

cultures. Aryans and non-Aryans settled down together recognising each other's right to their culture, and outsiders who came like the Parsis, found a welcome and a place in the social order. With the coming of the Moslems, the equilibrium was disturbed, but India sought to restore it, and largely succeeded. Unhappily for us before we could adjust our difference, the political structure broke down, the British came and we fell.

Great as was the success of India in evolving a stable society she failed and in a vital particular, and because she failed in this, she fell and remains fallen. No solution was found for the problem of equality. India deliberately ignored this and built up her social structure on inequality and we have the tragic consequences of this policy in the millions of our people who till yesterday were suppressed and had little opportunity for growth.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

And yet when Europe fought her wars of religion and Christians massacred each other in the name of their Saviour, India was tolerant, although alas! there is little of this toleration to-day. Having attained some measure of liberty, Europe sought after political liberty, and political and legal equality. Having attained these also, she finds that they mean very little without economic liberty and equality. And so to-day politics have ceased to have much meaning and the most vital question is that of social and economic equality.

India also will have to find a solution to this problem and until she does so her political and social structure cannot have stability. That solution need not necessarily follow the example of any other country. It must, if it has to endure, be based on the genius of her people and be an outcome of her thought and culture. And when it is found, the unhappy differences between various communities, which trouble us to-day and keep back our freedom, will automatically disappear.

Indeed, the real differences have already largely gone, but fear of each other and distrust and suspicion remain

and sow seeds of discord. The problem is how to remove fear and suspicion and, being intangible, they are hard to get at. An earnest attempt was made to do so last year by the All-Parties' Committee and much progress was made towards the goal. But we must admit with sorrow that success has not wholly crowned its efforts. Many of our Muslim and Sikh friends have strenuously opposed the solutions suggested and passions have been roused over mathematical figures and percentages. Logic and cold reason are poor weapons to fight fear and distrust. Only faith and generosity can overcome them. I can only hope that the leaders of various communities will have this faith and generosity in ample measure. What shall we gain for ourselves or for our community, if all of us are slaves in a slave country? And what can we lose if once we remove the shackles from India and can breathe the air of freedom again? Do we want outsiders who are not of us and who have kept us in bondage, to be the protectors of our little rights and privileges, when they deny us the very right to freedom? No majority can crush a determined minority, and no minority can be sufficiently protected by a little addition to its seats in a legislature. Let us remember that in the world to-day, almost everywhere a very small minority holds wealth and power and dominates over the great majority.

PLEA FOR GENEROSITY

I have no love for bigotry and dogmatism in religion and I am glad that they are weakening. Nor do I love communalism in any shape or form. I find it difficult to appreciate why political or economic rights should depend on the membership of a religious group or community. I can fully understand the right to freedom in religion and the right to one's culture, and in India specially, which has always acknowledged and granted these rights, it should be no difficult matter to ensure their continuance. We have only to find out some way whereby we may root out the fear and distrust that darken our horizon to-day. The politics of a subject race are largely

based on fear and hatred and we have been too long under subjection to get rid of them easily.

I was born a Hindu, but I do not know how far I am justified in calling myself one or in speaking on behalf of Hindus. But births still count in this country and by right of birth I shall venture to submit to the leaders of the Hindus that it should be their privilege to take the lead in generosity. Generosity is not only good morals, but is often good politics and sound expediency. And it is inconceivable to me that in a free India, the Hindus can ever be powerless. So far as I am concerned, I would gladly ask our Muslim and Sikh friends to take what they will without protest or argument from me. I know that the time is coming soon when these labels and appellations will have little meaning and when our struggle will be on an economic basis. Meanwhile, it matters little what our mutual arrangements are, provided only that we do not build up barriers which will come in the way of our future progress.

TOWARDS THE GOAL

The time has indeed already come when the All-Parties' Report has to be put aside and we march forward unfettered to our goal. You will remember that the resolution of the last Congress fixed a year of grace for the adoption of the All-Parties' scheme. That year is nearly over and the natural issue of that decision is for this Congress to declare in favour of independence and devise sanctions to achieve it.

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VICEROY'S ANNOUNCEMENT

Recently, there has been a seeming offer of peace. The Viceroy has stated on behalf of the British Government that the leaders of Indian opinion will be invited to confer with the Government on the subject of India's future constitution. The Viceroy meant well and his language was the language of peace. But

even a Viceroy's goodwill and courteous phrases are poor substitutes for the hard facts that confront us. We have sufficient experience of the devious ways of British diplomacy to beware of it. The offer which the British Government made was vague and there was no commitment or promise of performance. Only by the greatest stretch of imagination could it be interpreted as a possible response to the Calcutta resolution. Many leaders of various political parties met together soon after and considered it. They gave it the most favourable interpretation, for they desired peace and were willing to go half way to meet it. But in courteous language they made clear what the vital conditions for its acceptance were. Many of us who believed in independence and were convinced that the offer was only a device to lead us astray and create division in our ranks, suffered bitter anguish and were torn with doubt. Were we justified in precipitating a terrible national struggle with all its inevitable consequences of suffering for many, when there was even an outside chance of honourable peace ? With much searching of heart we signed that manifesto and I know not to-day if we did right or wrong. Later came the explanations and amplifications in the British Parliament and elsewhere and all doubt, if doubt there was, was removed as to the true significance of the offer. Even so your Working Committee chose to keep open the door of negotiation and left it to this Congress to take the final decision.

During the last few days there has been another discussion of this subject in the British House of Commons and the Secretary of State for India has endeavoured to point out that successive British Governments have tried to prove, not only by words but by deeds also, the sincerity of their faith in regard to India. We must recognise Mr. Wedgwood Benn's desire to do something for India and his anxiety to secure the goodwill of the Indian people. But his speech and other speeches made in Parliament carry us no further. "Dominion Status in action" to which he draws attention has been a snare for us and has certainly not reduced the exploitation of India.

The burdens on the Indian masses are even greater to-day, because of this "Dominion Status in action" and the so-called constitutional reforms of ten years ago. High Commissioners in London, and representatives of the League of Nations and the purchase of stores, and Indian Governors and high officials are no parts of our demand. We want to put an end to the exploitation of India's poor and to get the reality of power and not merely the livery of office. Mr. Wedgwood Benn has given us a record of the achievements of the past decade. He could have added to it by referring to Martial Law in the Punjab and the Jallianwala Bagh shooting and the repression and exploitation that have gone on continually during this period of "Dominion Status in action". He has given us some insight into what more of Dominion Status may mean for us. It will mean the shadow of authority to a handful of Indians and more repression and exploitation of the masses.

INDEPENDENCE INEVITABLE

What will this Congress do? The conditions for co-operation remain unfulfilled. Can we co-operate so long as there is no guarantee that real freedom will come to us? Can we co-operate when our comrades lie in prison and repression continues? Can we co-operate until we are assured that real peace is sought after and not merely a tactical advantage over us? Peace cannot come at the point of the bayonet, and if we are to continue to be dominated over by an alien people, let us at least be no consenting parties to it.

If the Calcutta resolution holds, we have but one goal to-day, that of independence. Independence is not a happy word in the world to-day; for it means exclusiveness and isolation. Civilisation has had enough of narrow nationalism and gropes towards a wider co-operation and inter-dependence. And if we use the word 'independence', we do so in no sense hostile to the larger ideal. Independence for us means complete freedom from British domination and British imperialism. Having attained our freedom, I have no doubt that India will welcome all attempts at world-co-operation and

federation, and will even agree to give up part of her own independence to a larger group of which she is an equal member.

BRITISH IMPERIALISM

The British Empire to-day is not such a group and cannot be so long as it dominates over millions of people and holds large areas of the world's surface despite the will of their inhabitants. It cannot be a true commonwealth so long as imperialism is its basis and the exploitation of other races its chief means of sustenance. The British Empire to-day is indeed gradually undergoing a process of political dissolution. It is in a state of unstable equilibrium. The Union of South Africa is not a very happy member of the family, nor is the Irish Free State, a willing one. Egypt drifts away. India could never be an equal member of the Commonwealth unless imperialism and all it implies is discarded. So long as this is not done, India's position in the Empire must be one of subservience and her exploitation will continue. * * * *

There is talk of world-peace and pacts have been signed by the nations of the world. But despite pacts armaments grow and beautiful language is the only homage that is paid to the goddess of peace. So long as there is domination of one country by another, or the exploitation of one class by another, there will always be attempts to subvert the existing order and no stable equilibrium can endure. Out of imperialism and capitalism peace can never come. And it is because the British Empire stands for these and bases itself on the exploitation of the masses that we can find no willing place in it. No gain that may come to us is worth anything unless it helps in removing the grievous burdens on our masses. The weight of a great Empire is heavy to carry and for long our people have endured it. Their backs are bent down and their spirit has almost broken. How will they share in the Commonwealth partnership if the burden of exploitation continues? Many of the problems we have to face are the problems of vested

interests mostly created or encouraged by the British Government. The interests of the Rulers of Indian States, of British Officials and British Capital and Indian capital and of the owners of big Zamindaris are ever thrust upon us and they clamour for protection. The unhappy millions who really need protection are almost voiceless and have no advocates. * * *

A TEST

We have had much controversy about Independence and Dominion Status and we have quarrelled about words. But the real thing is the conquest of power by whatever name it may be called. I do not think that any form of Dominion Status applicable to India will give us real powers. A test of this power would be the entire withdrawal of the alien army of occupation and economic control. Let us, therefore, concentrate on these and the rest will follow easily.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

We stand therefore to-day for the fullest freedom of India. This Congress has not acknowledged and will not acknowledge the right of the British Parliament to dictate to us in any way. To it we make no appeal. But we do appeal to the Parliament and the conscience of the world, and to them we shall declare, I hope, that India submits no longer to any foreign domination. To-day or to-morrow, we may not be strong enough to assert our will. We are very conscious of our weakness, and there is no boasting in us or pride of strength. But let no one, least of all England, mistake or under-rate the meaning or strength of our resolve. Solemnly, with full knowledge of consequences I hope, we shall take it and there will be no turning back. A great nation cannot be thwarted for long when once its mind is clear and resolved. If to-day we fail and to-morrow brings no success, the day after will follow and bring achievement.

NO SURRENDER

We are weary of strife and hunger for peace and opportunity to work constructively for our country. Do we

enjoy the breaking up of our homes and the sight of our brave young men going to prison or facing the halter? Does the worker like going on strike and losing even his miserable pittance and starving? He does so by sheer compulsion when there is no other way for him. And we who take this perilous path of national strife do so because there is no other way to an honourable peace. But we long for peace, and the hand of fellowship will always be stretched out to all who may care to grasp it. But behind the hand will be a body which will not bend to injustice and a mind that will not surrender on any vital point.

With the struggle before us, the time for determining our future constitution is not yet. For two years or more we have drawn up constitutions and finally the All-Parties' Committee put a crown to these efforts by drawing up a scheme of its own which the Congress adopted for a year. The labour that went to the making of this scheme was not wasted and India has profited by it. But the year is past and we have to face new circumstances which require action rather than constitution-making. Yet we cannot ignore the problems that beset us and that will make or mar our struggle and our future constitution. We have to aim at social adjustment and equilibrium and to overcome the forces of disruption that have been the bane of India.

SOCIALIST IDEAL

I must frankly confess that I am a socialist and a republican and am no believer in kings and princes, or in the order which produces the modern kings of industry, who have greater power over the lives and fortunes of men than even kings of old, and whose methods are predatory as those of the old feudal aristocracy. I recognise, however, that it may not be possible for a body constituted as is this National Congress and in the present circumstances of the country to adopt the full socialistic programme. But we just realise that the philosophy of socialism has gradually permeated the entire structure of society the world over and almost the only point in dispute is the pace and methods of advance to its full realisation. India will have to go that way

too if she seeks to end her poverty and inequality, though she may evolve her own methods and may adapt the ideal to the genius of her race.

We have three major problems—the minorities, the Indian States, and labour and peasantry. I have dealt already with the question of minorities. I shall only repeat that we must give the fullest assurance by our words and our deeds that their culture and traditions will be safe. * * * *

The Indian States cannot live apart from the rest of India and their rulers must, unless they accept their inevitable limitations, go the way of others who thought like them. And the only people who have a right to determine the future of the States must be the people of those States, including the rulers. This Congress which claims self-determination cannot deny it to the people of the States. Meanwhile, the Congress is perfectly willing to confer with such rulers as are prepared to do so and to devise means whereby the transition may not be too sudden. But in no event can the people of the States be ignored.

LABOUR

Our third major problem is the biggest of all. For India means the peasantry and labour and to the extent that we raise them and satisfy their wants will we succeed in our task. And the measure of the strength of our national movement will be the measure of their adherence to it. We can only gain them to our side by espousing their cause which is really the country's cause. The Congress has often expressed its good will towards them; but beyond that it has not gone. The Congress, it is said, must hold the balance fairly between capital and labour and zamindar and tenant.

But the balance has been and is terribly weighted on one side and to maintain the *status quo* is to maintain injustice and exploitation. The only way to right it is to do away with the domination of any one class over another. The All-India Congress Committee accepted this

idea of social and economic change in a resolution it passed some months ago in Bombay. I hope the Congress will also set its seal on it and will further draw up a programme of such changes as can be immediately put in operation.

In this programme perhaps the Congress as a whole cannot go very far to-day. But it must keep the ultimate ideal in view and work for it. The question is not one merely of wages and charity doled out by an employer or landlord. Paternalism in industry or in the land is but a form of charity with all its sting and its utter incapacity to root out the evil. The new theory of trusteeship, which some advocate, is equally barren. For trusteeship means that the power for good or evil remains with the self-appointed trustee and he may exercise it as he will. The sole trusteeship that can be fair is the trusteeship of the nation and not of one individual or a group. Many Englishmen honestly consider themselves the trustees for India, and yet to what a condition they have reduced our country.

HUMAN INTERESTS FIRST

We must decide for whose benefit industry must be run and the land produce food. To-day the abundance that the land produces is not for the peasant or the labourer who works on it; and industry's chief function is supposed to be to produce millionaires. However golden the harvests and heavy the dividends, the mud-huts and hovels and nakedness of our people testify to the glory of the British Empire and of our present social system.

Our economic programme must therefore be based on a human outlook and must not sacrifice man to money. If an industry cannot be run without starving its workers, then the industry must be closed down. If the workers on the land have not enough to eat, then the intermediaries who deprive them of their full share must go. The least that every worker in the field or factory is entitled to is a minimum wage which will enable him to live in moderate comfort, and human hours of labour which do not break his strength and spirit. The All-Parties' Committee accepted the principle and included

it in their recommendations. I hope the Congress will also do so and will in addition be prepared to accept its natural consequences. Further than that, it will adopt the well-known demands of labour for a better life, and will give every assistance to it to organise itself and prepare itself for the day when it can control industry on a co-operative basis.

OUR PEASANT CLASS

But industrial labour is only a small part of India, although it is rapidly becoming a force that cannot be ignored. It is the peasantry that cry loudly and piteously for relief and our programme must deal with their present condition. Real relief can only come by a great change in the land-laws and the basis of the present system of land tenure. We have among us many big landowners and we welcome them. But they must realise that the ownership of large estates by individuals, which is the outcome of a State resembling the old feudalism of Europe, is a rapidly disappearing phenomenon all over the world. Even in countries which are the strongholds of capitalism, the large estates are being split up and given to the peasantry who work on them. In India also we have large areas where the system of peasant proprietorship prevails and we shall have to extend this all over the country. I hope that in doing so, we may have the co-operation of some at least of the big landowners.

It is not possible for this Congress at its annual session to draw up any detailed economic programme. It can only lay down some general principles and call upon the the All-India Congress Committee to fill in the details in co-operation with the representatives of the Trade Union Congress and other organisations which are vitally interested in this matter. Indeed, I hope that the co-operation between this Congress and the Trade Union Congress will grow and the two organisations will fight side by side in future struggles.

CONQUEST OF POWER

All these are pious hopes till we gain power, and the real problem therefore before us is the conquest of power.

We shall not do so by subtle reasoning or argument or lawyers' quibbles, but by the forging of sanction to enforce the nation's will. To that end this Congress must address itself.

The past year has been one of preparation for us and we have made every effort to re-organise and strengthen the Congress organisation. The results have been considerable and our organisation is in a better state to-day than at any time since the reaction which followed the non-co-operation movement. But our weaknesses are many and are apparent enough. Mutual strife, even within Congress Committees, is unhappily too common and election squabbles drain all our strength and energy. How can we fight a great fight if we cannot get over this ancient weakness of ours and rise above our pretty selves ? I earnestly hope that with a strong programme of action before the country, our perspective will improve and we will not tolerate this barren and demoralising strife.

VIOLENCE OR NON-VIOLENCE

What can this programme be ? Our choice is limited, not by our own constitution which we can change at our will but by facts and circumstances. Article one of our constitution lays down that our methods must be legitimate and peaceful. Legitimate I hope they will always be, for we must not sully the great cause for which we stand by any deed that will bring dishonour to it and that we may ourselves regret later. Peaceful I should like them to be, for the methods of peace are more desirable and more enduring than those of violence. Violence too often brings reaction and demoralisation in its train, and in our country especially it may lead to disruption. It is perfectly true that organised violence rules the world to-day and it may be that we could profit by its use. But we have not the material or the training for organised violence and individual or sporadic violence is a confession of despair. The great majority of us, I take it, judge the issue not on moral but on practical grounds, and if we reject the way of violence it is becaue it promises no substantial results. * * *

Any great movement for liberation to-day must necessarily be a mass movement and mass movements must essentially be peaceful, except in times of organised revolt. Whether we have the non-co-operation of a decade ago or the modern industrial weapon of the general strike, the basis is peaceful organisation and peaceful action. And if the principal movement is a peaceful one, contemporaneous attempts at sporadic violence can only distract attention and weaken it. It is not possible to carry on at one and the same time the two movements, side by side. We have to choose and strictly to abide by our choice. What the choice of this Congress is likely to be I have no doubt. It can only choose a peaceful mass movement.

Should we repeat the programme and tactics of the non-co-operation movement? Not necessarily, but the basic idea must remain. Programmes and tactics must be made to fit in with circumstances and it is neither easy nor desirable for this Congress at this stage to determine them in detail. That should be the work of its executive, the All-India Congress Committee. But the principles have to be fixed.

The old programme was one of the three boycotts—Councils, law courts and schools—leading up to refusal of service in the army and non-payment of taxes. When the national struggle is at its height, I fail to see how it will be possible for any person engaged in it to continue in the courts or the schools. But still I think that it will be unwise to declare a boycott of the courts and schools at this stage.

BOYCOTT OF LEGISLATURES

The boycott of the Legislative Councils has led to much heated debate in the past and this Congress itself has been rent in twain over it. We need not revive that controversy, for the circumstances to-day are entirely different. I feel that the step the Congress took some years ago to permit Congressmen to enter the Councils was an inevitable step and I am not prepared to say that some good has not resulted from it. But we have

exhausted that good and there is no middle course left to-day between boycott and full co-operation. All of us know the demoralisation that these sham legislatures have brought in our ranks and now many of our good men, their committees and commissions lure away. Our workers are limited in number and we can have no mass movement unless they concentrate on it and turn their back to the palatial Council Chambers of our Legislatures. And if we declare for independence, how can we enter the Councils and carry on our humdrum and profitless activities there? No programme or policy can be laid down for ever, nor can this Congress bind the country or even itself to pursue one line of action indefinitely. But to-day I would respectfully urge the Congress that the only policy in regard to the Councils is a complete boycott of them. The All-India Congress Committee recommended this course in July last and the time has come to give effect to it.

This boycott will only be a means to an end. It will release energy and divert attention to the real struggle which must take the shape of the non-payment of taxes, where possible, with the co-operation of the labour movements, general strikes. But non-payment of taxes must be well organised in specific areas, and for this purpose the Congress should authorise the All-India Congress Committee to take the necessary action, wherever and whenever it considers desirable.

I have not so far referred to the constructive programme of the Congress. This should certainly continue but the experience of the last few years shows us that by itself it does not carry us swiftly enough. It prepared the ground for future action and ten years' silent work is bearing fruit to-day. In particular we shall, I hope, continue our boycott of foreign cloth and the boycott of British goods.

QUESTION OF DEBTS

Our programme must, therefore, be one of political and economic boycott. It is not possible for us, so long as we are not actually independent, and not even then completely,

to boycott another country wholly or to sever all connection with it. But our endeavour must be to reduce all points of contact with the British Government and to rely on ourselves. We must also make it clear that India will not accept responsibility for all the debts that England has piled on her. The Gaya Congress repudiated liability to these debts and we must repeat this repudiation and stand by it. Such of India's public debt as has been used for purposes beneficial to India we are prepared to admit and pay back. But we wholly deny all liability to pay back the vast sums which have been raised, so that India may be held in subjection and her burdens be increased. In particular the poverty-stricken people of India cannot agree to shoulder the burden of the wars fought by England to extend her domain and consolidate her position in India. Nor can they accept the many concessions lavishly bestowed without any proper compensation on foreign exploiters.

I have not referred so far to the Indians overseas and I do not propose to say much about them. This is not from any want of fellow-feeling with our brethren in East Africa or South Africa or Fiji or elsewhere, who are bravely struggling against great odds. But their fate will be decided in the plains of India and the struggle we are launching into is as much for them as for ourselves.

EFFICIENT MACHINERY NECESSARY

For this struggle, we want efficient machinery. Our Congress constitution and organisation have become too archaic and slow-moving and are ill-suited to times of crisis. The times of great demonstrations are past. We want quiet and irresistible action now and this can only be brought about by the strictest discipline in our ranks. Our resolutions must be passed in order to be acted upon. The Congress will gain in strength, however small its actual membership may become, if it acts in a disciplined way. Small determined minorities have changed the fate of nations. Mobs and crowds can do little. Freedom itself involves restraint and discipline and each one of us will have to subordinate himself to the larger good.

EVER SUPREME ENDEAVOUR

The Congress represents no small minority in the country and though many may be too weak to join it or to work for it, they look to it with hope and longing to bring them deliverance. Ever since the Calcutta resolution, the country has waited with anxious expectation for this great day when this Congress meets. None of us can say what and when we can achieve. We cannot command success. But success often comes to those who dare and act; it seldom goes to the timid who are ever afraid of the consequences. We play for high stakes; and if we seek to achieve great things it can only be through great dangers. Whether we succeed soon or late, none but ourselves can stop us from high endeavour and from writing a noble page in our country's long and splendid history.

We have conspiracy cases going on in various parts of the country. They are ever with us. But the time has gone for secret conspiracy. We have now an open conspiracy to free this country from foreign rule, and you comrades, and all our countrymen and countrywomen are invited to join it. But the rewards that are in store for you are suffering and prison and it may be death. But you shall also have the satisfaction that you have done your little bit for India, the ancient, but ever young, and have helped a little in the liberation of humanity from its present bondage.

Forty-fifth Congress—Karachi—1931

SARDAR VALLABHAI PATEL

FRIENDS,—Let me commence my brief address with respectful condolences to Shrimati Sarup Rani Nehru, Pandit Jawaharlal, and the other members of the family on the loss they have sustained in Pandit Motilalji's death. I know that their sorrow has been greatly relieved by the knowledge that it is shared by a whole nation. Motilalji's help at this juncture was a necessity which we all and above all Gandhiji felt whilst the delicate negotiations in Delhi were going on. This loss came upon the nation when the tears had hardly dried over the death of Maulana Mahomed Ali. Though unfortunately the late Maulana had differences with us, his services to the country as a great patriot and a brave man who never concealed what he believed, could never be forgotten. I tender my respectful condolences to the Begum Saheba, Maulana Shaukat Ali and the whole family. And in this connection I would couple those nameless heroes who unknown to fame, and never caring for it, laid down their lives in the non-violent struggle during the past twelve months. May their souls rest in peace and may their lives chasten us and spur us to greater sacrifice and greater effort for the cause for which they died ! * * * *

You have called a simple farmer to the highest office to which any Indian can aspire. I am conscious that your choice of me as first servant is not so much for what little I might have done, but it is the recognition of the amazing sacrifice made by Gujarat. Out of your generosity you have singled out Gujarat for the honour. But in truth every province did its utmost during the year of the greatest

national awakening that we have known in modern times. And thanks be to God that the awakening was a call to self-purification.

Though there have been aberrations, it is a fact beyond challenge that India has given a singular proof to the world that mass non-violence is no longer the idle dream of a visionary or a mere human longing. It is a solid fact capable of infinite possibilities for a humanity which is groaning, for want of faith, beneath the weight of violence of which it has almost made a fetish. The greatest proof that our movement was non-violent lies in the fact that the peasants falsified the fears of our worst sceptics. They were described as very difficult to organise for non-violent action and it is they who stood the test with a bravery and an endurance that was beyond all expectation. Women and children too contributed their great share in the fight. They responded to the call by instinct and played a part which we are too near the event adequately to measure. And I think it would not be at all wrong to give them the bulk of the credit for preservation of non-violence and the consequent success of the movement. Looked at in the light of non-violence our struggle is a world struggle and it is a matter of great satisfaction that the nations of the earth, especially the United States of America have heartened us by their sympathy.

The recent settlement however renders it unnecessary to dwell at greater length upon this heroic period in the national life. Your Working Committee has entered into the Settlement in anticipation of your approval. You are now invited formally to endorse it. The Committee having accepted it as your accredited representatives, it is not, I take it, open to you to repudiate it; but it is open to you to pass a vote of no-confidence in the present executive and appoint better agents. But whilst it is but meet that I should draw your attention to the constitutional position, I have no doubt whatsoever that you will endorse the settlement which I hold to be perfectly honourable for both the parties. Had we not accepted the settlement we should have put ourselves in the

wrong and thereby undone the effect of the sufferings of the past year. Indeed we had always claimed, as Satyagrahis must claim, to be ready and eager for peace. When therefore the way seemed to be open for peace, we took it. In view of the clear demand on the part of the British Indian Delegation at the Round Table Conference for full responsibility, and in view of the British parties having accepted the position and in view of the appeal made to the Congress by the Premier, the Viceroy and many of our distinguished countrymen, the Working Committee thought that if an honourable truce could be arranged and if it was open to the Congress to press without any reservation for what it considered to be the best for the country, the Congress should, if invited, take part in the Conference and attempt to reach an agreed solution of the constitutional issue. If we failed in the attempt and there was no way open but that of suffering, then it was a privilege of which no power on earth could deprive us. Under the constitution clause of the Settlement it is open to us to press for Purna Swaraj, to ask for complete control over our defence forces, foreign affairs, finance, fiscal policy and the like. There would be safeguards or reservations, or as the late Pandit Motilalji called them, adjustments, conceived in our own interest. When power passes from one to the other by agreement there are always safeguards in the interest of the party in need of reparation or help. The continued exploitation of India for close on two centuries renders it necessary for us to seek assistance in several respects from external sources. This we would gladly take from Britain, if she is willing to give. Thus we would need military skill and there is no reason why we may not receive English assistance in this direction. I have taken only one telling illustration out of others that may be suggested. The defence safeguard may therefore be the retention of British officers, or, as some would say, even privates ; but we could never let our defence be controlled by the British. We must have the full power to make mistakes. We may gratefully receive British advice ; never dictation. The fact is that the British army in India is an army of occupation. Defence

is a misnomer. Frankly, the army is for defending British interests and British men and women against any internal uprising. I cannot recall a single instance in which the Indian army was required for the protection of India to fight a foreign power. True, there have been expeditions on the Frontier, wars with Afghanistan. British historians have taught us that they were wars more of aggression rather than of defence. We must not therefore be frightened by the bogey of foreign designs upon India. In my opinion if we need an army, we certainly do not need the octopus we are daily bleeding to support. If the Congress has its way, the army will suffer immediate reduction to its desirable proportion.

Nor can we divide financial control with the British Government. The nation cannot grow to its full height if it has not exclusive control over its finance.

Again we have been taught to think that our civil administration will be inefficient and corrupt if we give up the able assistance of highly paid British civilians. The administrative powers that the Congress has exhibited during recent years and the fact of its having on an ever-increasing scale drawn to its assistance some of the best young men and women either without pay or on a mere pittance should sufficiently dispose of the fear of corruption or inefficiency. It would be too great a strain upon our poor purse to have to pay by way of insurance against corruption a premium out of all proportion to the highest possible estimate of corruption that may ever take place. It will therefore be necessary, if India is to come to her own, to demand a heavy reduction in the Civil Service expenditure and thus a consequent reduction in the emoluments of the Civil Service.

We have claimed that many of the charges laid upon India are wholly unjust. We have never suggested repudiation of a single obligation, but we have asked and must continue to ask for an impartial investigation into the debits against us wherever we cannot agree.

There is no receding from the Lahore resolution of Complete Independence. This independence does not

mean, was not intended to mean, a churlish refusal to associate with Britain or any other power. Independence therefore does not exclude the possibility of equal partnership for mutual benefit and dissolvable at the will of either party. If India is to reach her independence through consultation and agreement, it is reasonable to suppose that there is a strong body of opinion in the country to the effect that before a partnership could possibly be conceived there must be a period of complete dissociation. I do not belong to that school. It is, as I think, a sign of weakness and of disbelief in human nature.

Federation is a fascinating idea. But it introduces new embarrassments. Princes will not listen to severence. But if they will come in the true spirit it will be a great gain. Their association must not be to impede the progress of democracy. I hope therefore that they will not take up an uncompromising attitude that may be wholly inconsistent with the spirit of freedom. I wish they would without any pressure give us an earnest of their desire to march abreast of the time-spirit. Surely the fundamental rights of their subjects should be guaranteed as of the rest of the inhabitants of India. All the inhabitants of Federated India should enjoy some common elementary rights. And if there are rights, there must be a common court to give relief from any encroachment upon them. Nor can it be too much to expect that the subjects of the states should be to an extent directly represented on the federal legislature.

As regards Burma, press censorship has rendered it impossible for us to know the true situation there. Whether Burma should be separate from India or should be part of a Free India is for the Burmese alone to decide. But it is our concern, indeed it is the world's concern, to see that all sides are heard. It is well known that there is a unionist party in Burma. It is as much entitled to freedom of opinion as the separatists. If therefore the information given to the Congress that unionist opinion is strangled be true, the injustice must be resisted. The

proposition that there should be a referendum of Burmese opinion seems to me to be eminently reasonable.

But before all else comes the question of Hindu-Muslim or rather communal unity. The position of the Congress was defined at Lahore. Let me recite the resolution here :

> In view of the lapse of the Nehru Report it is unnecessary to declare the policy of the Congress regarding communal questions, the Congress believing that in an independent India, communal questions can only be solved on strictly national lines. But as the Sikhs in particular and Muslims and other minorities in general had expressed dissatisfaction over the solution of the communal question proposed in the Nehru Report, this Congress assures the Sikhs, Muslims and other minorities that no solution thereof in any future constitution can be acceptable to the Congress, that does not give full satisfaction to the parties concerned.

Therefore the Congress can be no party to any constitution which does not contain a solution of the communal question that is not designed to satisfy the respective parties. As a Hindu I would adopt my predecessor's formula and present the minorities with a Swadeshi fountain-pen and paper and let them write out their demands. And I should endorse them. I know that it is the quickest method. But it requires courage on the part of the Hindus. What we want is a heart unity, not patched up paper-unity that will break under the slightest strain. That unity can only come when the majority takes courage in both the hands and is prepared to change places with the minority. This would be the highest wisdom. Whether the unity is reached that way or any other, it is becoming plainer day after day that it is useless to attend any conference unless that unity is achieved. The Conference can give us an agreement between the British and us, it can perhaps help us to come nearer to the Princes; but it can never enable us to achieve unity. That must be hammered into shape by ourselves. The Congress must leave no stone unturned to realise this much-desired end.

It must be clear to all of us that the Congress can be useful for attaining Purna Swaraj only to the extent that it

has gained power. The past twelve months have undoubtedly given it a power which he who runs may see. But it is not enough and can be easily frittered away by hasty action or by pride. He is a spendthrift who lives on his capital. We must therefore add to our power. One way to do so is on our part to fulfil to the letter the conditions of the Settlement. The other is to consolidate our gains. I therefore propose to devote a few lines to this part of our activity.

We have made much headway in the matter of the boycott of foreign cloth. It is a right as well as a duty. Without it, the impoverished millions of India must continue to starve. For if cheap foreign cloth continues to be dumped down in the villages of India, the Charkha cannot flourish. Foreign cloth must therefore be banished from the land. It is dear even if it could be obtained free. The millions who starve do so, not because there is not enough in the land but because they have no work during the off-season. It is therefore want of easy employment in their own villages that leads to starvation. Incessant propaganda is necessary to rid the country of chronic unemployment which has become second nature with our peasantry. The best propaganda is to do sacrificial spinning ourselves and wear Khadi. The All-India Spinners' Association has done much valuable work. But it is for the Congress to create the Spinning and the Khaddar atmosphere. This to my mind is the best and the most effective propaganda of Boycott.

It has been suggested that the argument against foreign cloth applies to indigenous mill cloth. This is true to an extent. But our mills do not produce all the cloth we need. For years to come they may continue to supply the balance that may be required over and above hand-spun cloth. But even our mills may prove a hindrance, if they compete with Khaddar or resort to questionable devices to push their wares. Fortunately many mills are patriotically working in co-operation with the Congress and are beginning to appreciate the virtue of Khaddar in the interest of the toiling millions. But I can certainly say

that if our mills unpatriotically hurt Khaddar instead of complimenting it, they must face an opposition somewhat similar to that against foreign cloth.

The foreign cloth merchants will do well to bear the Congress attitude in mind in this regard. Foreign cloth boycott is a permanent thing not conceived as a political weapon but as an economic and social measure of permanent value for the welfare of the masses. These merchants, therefore, if they will look into the future and think of their country, will do well to give up their foreign cloth trade. Everything possible is being done to help them but some very big sacrifice on their part is essential.

English, Japanese and other foreign merchants will, I hope, not misunderstand the Congress attitude. If they will help India, they will deny themselves the Indian trade in foreign cloth. They have other markets and other enterprises.

This brings me to picketing. This has not been and cannot be given up. I give below the relevant clause of the Settlement.

> Picketing shall be unaggressive and it shall not involve coercion, intimidation, restraint, hostile demonstration, obstruction to the public, or any offence under the ordinary law; and if and when any of these methods is employed in any place, the practice of picketing in that place will be suspended.

Picketing is a common law right. But you will observe that within the limits prescribed it is not only inoffensive but highly educative. Its function is gentle persuasion, never coercion or violent restraint on liberty. I use the adjective 'violent' advisedly. The restraining force of public opinion there always will be. It is healthy, elevating and conducive to the growth of liberty as distinguished from licence. Non-violent picketing is designed to create public opinion, an atmosphere which should become irresistible. This can best be carried on by women. I hope therefore that they will continue the marvellous work begun by them and earn the eternal gratitude of the nation and, what is more, the blessings of the starving millions.

In this connection let me say a few words regarding boycott of British goods. This idea is almost as old as the Congress. We know that after the advent of Gandhiji on the political platform, boycott of British goods was replaced by that of foreign—not only British—cloth. He interpreted it in terms of economics and social uplift, whereas the boycott of the British goods as such is a political and punitive measure. This was effectively employed during the recent hurricane campaign. Now that there is at least temporary peace, and we seek to reach our goal through consultation and conference, we must withdraw the political weapon. We cannot be sitting at the friendly conference table and outside making designs to hurt British interests. Whilst therefore we must for the time being withdraw British goods' boycott, we must intensify Swadeshi which is the birthright of every nation. Whatever we produce in our country we must encourage to the exclusion of foreign whether British or other. This is the condition of national growth. Thus we must encourage and carry on intensive propaganda on behalf of indigenous insurance companies, banking, shipping and the like. We may not belittle or neglect them on the ground of their inferiority or dearness. Only by wide use and helpful criticism may we make them cheaper and better.

There is much lose talk about equality of treatment. What is equality of treatment between the strong and the weak, between giant and dwarf, between elephant and ant? If Lord Inchcape with his fabulous wealth and resources claimed equal rights with Seth Narotam Morarji of lamented memory, it would be a travesty of equality. It will be time enough to talk of equality of treatment after Narotamdas's successors have made some little approach to Lord Inchcape's resources. Equality of treatment in the case of hopeless unequals ought to mean raising the less favoured upto the level of the most favoured. Thus equality of treatment for suppressed classes on the part of the so-called superior classes means raising the former to the latter's level; the latter sacrificing

their substance and stooping to conquer. In relation to the British we have hitherto occupied a position in some respects lower even than the suppressed classes. Protection of Indian industries and enterprise to the exclusion of British or foreign, is a condition of our national existence even under a state of partnership. Protection within even the British Commonwealth is no new-fangled notion. It is in vogue in the Dominions to the extent necessary for their growth.

Just as boycott of foreign cloth is an economic necessity for the sake of the starving millions, boycott of intoxicating drink and drugs is a necessity for the moral welfare of the nation. The idea of total Prohibition was born before its political effect was thought of. The Congress conceived it as a measure of self-purification. Even if the Government earmarked the revenue from this traffic for purely Prohibition purposes, our picketing of these shops would continue, no doubt subject to the same severe restrictions as in the case of foreign cloth. I invite the Government during the transition stage to anticipate the verdict of the national legislature and not merely tolerate picketing of the two things, foreign cloth and drink and drugs, but make, if they will, common cause with the nation. But whether they will or no, we cannot rest still, so long as there is a yard of foreign cloth entering the country or a single liquor shop corrupting our misguided countrymen.

One word regarding salt. The salt raids must stop. Defiance of salt laws for the sake of civil disobedience must stop. But the poor, living in the neighbourhood of salt areas, are free to make and sell salt within that neighbourhood. The Salt Tax is not gone, it is true. In view of the likelihood of the Congress participating in the Conference, we may not press for the immediate repeal of the tax which is bound to come very soon. But the poorest on whose behalf the campaign was undertaken are now virtually free from the tax. I hope that no traders will seek to take an undue advantage of the relaxation.

The foregoing perhaps shows you how uninterested I am in many things that interest the intelligentsia. I am not interested in loaves and fishes, or legislative honours. The peasantry do not understand them, they are little affected by them. I believe that Gandhiji's eleven points mean the substance of Swaraj. That which does not satisfy them is no Swaraj. Whilst I would respect the rights of landlords, Rajas, Maharajas and others to the extent that they do not hurt the sweating millions, my interest lies in helping the downtrodden to rise from their state and be on a level with the tallest in the land. Thank God, the gospel of Truth and Non-Violence has given these an inkling of their dignity and the power they possess. Much still remains to be done. But let us make up our minds that we exist for them, not they for us. Let us shed our petty rivalries and jealousies, religious feuds and let every one realise that the Congress represents and exists for the toiling millions and it will become an irresistible power working not for greed or power but for the sake of common humanity.

There is one part of the constructive programme which I have not dealt with already ; that is the all important work of removing untouchability. It is no use tinkering with the problem. The recent heroic struggle on the part of the nation would have been more glorious if Hindus had purged Hinduism of this evil. But heroism or glory apart, no Swaraj would be worth having without this supreme act of self-purification ; and even if Swaraj is won whilst this stain continues to blacken Hinduism, it would be as insecure as a Swaraj without a complete boycott of foreign cloth.

In conclusion, I may not forget our brethren overseas. Their lot in South Africa, in East Africa and in the other parts of the world is still hanging in the balance. Deenabandhu Andrews is happily in South Africa helping our countrymen. Pandit Hridaya Nath Kunzru has specialised in the Indian question in East Africa. The only consolation the Congress can give is to assure them of its sympathy.

They know that their lot must automatically improve to the extent that we approach our goal. In your name I would appeal to the Governments concerned to treat with consideration the members of a nation which is bound at a very early date to enter upon her heritage and which means ill to no nation on earth. We ask them to extend to our nationals the same treatment they would have us, when we are free, to extend to theirs. This is surely not asking too much.

I invite you to conduct your proceedings, over which you have asked me to preside, in a manner befitting the grave occasion at which we have met. Differences of opinion are bound to exist ; but I trust that every one here will co-operate to make our deliberations dignified and conducive to the attainment of our goal.

BANDE MATARAM.

Forty-eighth Congress—Bombay—1934*

BABU RAJENDRA PRASAD

BROTHERS and Sisters,—We are meeting after three years and a half of strenuous work and suffering. The country has had the misfortune of losing the guidance and mature judgment of a veteran worker like Dr. Annie Besant, whose life and work have been a source of inspiration to thousands. It has further had the misfortune of losing another veteran patriot in Sir Shankaran Nair and a valiant nationalist in Mr. Syed Hasan Imam, who, 16 years ago, guided the deliberations of a special session of the Congress in this very city. The passing away of that uncompromising champion of our liberties whether in or out of the Speaker's chair, Vithalbhai Patel leaves a gap, which will be well-nigh impossible to fill. To many of us, the premature death of Deshpriya Jatindra Mohan Sen Gupta was a personal calamity. In Mr. A. Rangaswamy Iyengar the country has lost not only a distinguished journalist but also a constitutional lawyer, whose knowledge was frequently requisitioned.

Let me also remind you of the one, who is behind prison bars and who represents more than any one else the flower of the youth of our country and whose ardent spirit is undaunted by national set-backs or domestic anxieties. To Jawaharlal Nehru, our heartiest greetings and sympathy. Our thought also must go to the sturdy fighter, Subhas Chandra Bose, now in a foreign land. Nor may we forget all those who, though unknown, have suffered or are still suffering for the sake of the country.

To those servants of the nation, known and unknown, who have passed away, we offer our homage.

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* 26th October, 1934.

You have called me to preside over the Congress at a very difficult and critical time. It will be natural on your part to expect me to carry on the national work till the next session of the Congress.

I confess, I feel overwhelmed by the tremendous responsibility that the position carries with it. I would have been happy to be left alone to work in my own humble way in my corner of the country, but the nation's call may not be disobeyed and I am here at your service. I am fully conscious of my limitations, and I have sense enough to know that this signal mark of confidence is not meant as a personal tribute, but is only a token of appreciation of the little contribution that my poor province has been able to make during the recent struggle and of the sympathy which it has been its good fortune to receive in such ample measure in its recent unprecedented calamity. It rests, however, with you to help me by your unstinted support and co-operation to carry on the difficult duties you have entrusted to me.

Coming as I do from a province which, during the last ten months or so, has been particularly selected as the victim of Nature's wrath, I desire to convey my heartfelt thanks to the country, which has shown practical sympathy with the people stricken by phenomenal earthquake followed by huge floods. The response, which has come from all quarters and from all classes of people, inhabiting this vast country and from Indians abroad, and from foreigners shows conclusively that if the disaster was unprecedented in its magnitude, the sympathy and fellow-feeling it evoked, was equally unparalleled. There have been disasters in the past, which though not so vast in extent, were still some of the greatest recorded in history, and yet the country was never before roused to such a pitch of active sympathy. As the national feeling has grown and pervaded the country at large, the wail of people in a corner of Northern India has re-sounded and re-echoed from one end to the other and drawn out not only cash but tears and personal service. As the Bihar Central Relief Committee said in one of its early statements: "Out of the

great tragedy that has overwhelmed Bihar and taken its heavy toll of death and destruction and sorrow, some enduring good has come in the shape of a united nation joined together in common sorrow and common effort to overcome it, having faith in each other and forgetting the petty differences that seemed too trivial in the face of a mighty disaster."

RECENT HISTORY

The Congress movement has passed through various phases during the last fifty years of its existence. One would feel tempted to take a bird's-eye view of its hope and aspirations, its weaknesses and failures, its successes and triumphs. But I would resist that temptation except in so far as its recent history may be necessary to elucidate the present and enable us to lay out a programme for the future.

It will be recalled that the last regular session of the Congress was held at Karachi in March 1931, soon after the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. It was much to be hoped that that Pact would open a way to permanent peace between Britain and India, but that was not to be. Now that Civil Disobedience has been suspended, it would be useless to go into a detailed examination of the circumstances which forced the hands of the Congress to re-start Civil Disobedience after Mahatma Gandhi's return from the Second Round Table Conference. I would content myself by stating that at every step the object of the authors of the Pact was frustrated by the officials who were in charge of affairs and had to give effect to its provisions. Lord Irwin had retired. Lord Willingdon had come in and there was undisguised resentment in official circles at what was regarded as a surrender on the part of Lord Irwin. And the moment he was away from the scene, a complete change in the Government policy came about and preparations were set afoot to take the Congress by surprise as soon as the Round Table Conference was over. It was known the Government could not afford, and did not intend, to accept the demands of the Congress. Events in England also proved favourable to this scheme of things.

The Labour Government had resigned. The National Government with a big Conservative majority was formed and the whole policy of Lord Irwin and Mr. Wedgwood Ben was reversed. When Mahatma Gandhi returned from England, he found himself faced with a situation which seemed to have been very carefully and meticulously prepared. An excuse was found in what was wrongly described and advertised as a No-Rent Campaign in the United Provinces, but which was really nothing more than suspension of payment pending negotiations, which had been going on between the Government on the one side and the Congress leaders on the other, to secure a settlement on an equitable basis on the very serious question of remission or suspension of rent on purely economic grounds, which had become necessary on account of unprecedented economic depression. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Mr. Sherwani and Mr. Tandon were arrested just two days before Mahatma Gandhi's arrival and Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan with some of his colleagues was made a prisoner under an old Regulation. Bengal had already been selected for special treatment and a number of most drastic Ordinances had been promulgated. They were followed by equally drastic Ordinances for the United Provinces and the Frontier. On his voyage, Mahatma Gandhi had been issuing statements offering co-operation but on landing he came to know of the removal, by arrest and imprisonment, of valued colleagues and the promulgation of the Ordinances in the United Provinces and the Frontier; yet he offered, on behalf of the Working Committee, to intervene and, if possible, to bring about a settlement and applied to the Viceroy for an interview, which was unceremoniously rejected except under condition that the questions relating to Bengal, the U. P. and the Frontier would not be subjects of discussion. The interview having been rejected, Mahatma Gandhi had no option but to advise the Working Committee to be prepared for the revival of Civil Disobedience. But he made a last moment attempt and sent a second long telegram begging again for an unconditional interview, failing which, he thought it his

duty to inform the Viceroy that the Working Committee would have to resort to Civil Disobedience. Reply came to this last moment request in the form of warrants of arrest for himself, the Congress President, Sardar Vallabhai Patel, and other prominent Congressmen throughout the country.

The Congress was taken unawares and the Government expected that they would be able to crush the whole movement within a fortnight. In spite of want of preparation, in spite of sudden removal of all the prominent Congress workers throughout the country within a few days to prison, when they were not able to give instructions to their followers as to how to organise the campaign, it must be said to the credit of the nation that the lead, which had been given by the Working Committee, was faithfully and spontaneously followed. Thousands again courted imprisonment, *lathi* charges, firings, heavy fines, confiscation of property, and beatings on an extensive scale.

The movement was not crushed and went on for months and months without a break to the bewilderment of officials, who had hoped to crush it in a few days. Special sessions of the Congress were held at Delhi and at Calcutta amidst arrest and lathi charges and in spite of the vigilance of the police, who had concentrated upon preventing them. It is unnecessary to go into details of this repression beyond stating that a bare summary of the provisions of the various Ordinances, most of which were later converted into Acts by obliging Legislatures, will show how drastic they were in character and comprehensive in scope. The courts were ousted from jurisdiction and the Executive armed with large powers. The press was muzzled. New offences were created and in some cases collective and vicarious punishments laid down. To these must be added numerous laws enacted for Bengal particularly, apparently to meet what is described as the terrorist menace, but resulting not in a few cases in a complete suspension of all political activities of a progressive type, lest their sponsors should incur the wrath and the penalty of the all powerful C. I. D. Now, the Congress has never concealed

its view regarding the terrorist movement. It has condemned without hesitation and in an unequivocal language all terrorist outrages, and under the great influence of Mahatma Gandhi has done all it could to create an atmosphere against the cult of terrorism. But at every step, it has felt hampered by the fact that impatient enthusiasts who take to this wrong method, cannot effectively be approached by public opinion on account of the stiffness of the Government attitude and its all-pervading blasting suspicion of the motives of even those, who are its supporters and helpers in this respect. Apart from other considerations, the Congress condemns terrorism, because it hampers the country's progress and tends to create forces which will lead to further disruption and trouble and because it is essentially wrong and un-Indian. But these young men cannot be weaned from it by the equally indefensible method of unadulterated repression.

The country has been passing through a period of deep economic depression, which has been intensified by the Government policy of managing Indian affairs in the interests not of India but of Great Britain. The past few years have seen great distress of the peasantry unable to pay the heavy land revenue and rent and suffering great privations. They have witnessed curtailment of expenditure on nation-building departments, great slump in industry, export of more than 200 crores of distress gold, dislocation of trade and a tremendous increase in unemployment the extent of which even in the best of normal years, the British Government have never dared to ascertain owing to its vastness. These years have been remarkable for heavy additions to the so-called Public Debt of India and the burdens of the already overtaxed tax-payer and the poverty-stricken population for carrying on an extravagant and top-heavy administration and partly for suppressing and crushing the movement for freedom.

The Ottawa Pact, which has been condemned with one voice by the best-informed opinion in the country as being detrimental to the best interests of India, and

particularly of the masses of agriculturists, was ratified. Its working has proved that the apprehensions of its critics were well founded. It has successfully tied India to the chariot wheels of the British policy of Imperial preference.

INDIANS ABROAD

The position of our countrymen abroad gives no ground for satisfaction. Their treatment in the colonies of the British Empire has been a long-standing cause of just grievance and has influenced not a little the change in our outlook and opinion in favour of complete independence. One after another, Indians settled in these colonies and protectorates are being deprived of their inherent rights to which they are entitled by virtue of their long association, service and contribution to the prosperity of these colonies. They have, in fact, been instrumental in many cases in building up these colonies and many have been born in them and have their homes without any other in the world. One scheme after another is devised to get rid of them after they are no more needed, and although it is some consolation to know that the scheme of assisted repatriation has been given up, it is also to be noted that no place is found in the vast British Empire where they can live and settle with the same full rights to land and citizenship as others have in India. The latest application of this policy of squeezing out Indians is reported from Zanzibar where, in spite of the best of relations which Indians have maintained for generations with the Sultan and his subjects, Ordinances have been hurriedly passed, which deprive them of the rights of acquiring land. The discrimination against Indians becomes flagrant when we know that this restriction does not extend to the new arrivals from Arabia. There is nothing surprising in all this when we know that Indians do not enjoy even elementary rights of citizenship in their own country and which even the proposed constitutional reforms are not going to confer on them. We can only give this assurance to our countrymen abroad that as our position at home improves, their position will also automatically improve. In this connection it is

impossible not to mention with gratitude the great name of Deenabandhu C. F. Andrews, who has been frequently going to Africa to render such help as has been possible for him to render.

THE DUAL POLICY

The Government policy, which was enunciated by Lord Irwin towards the end of 1929 announcing the convening of the Round Table Conference has always had a double aspect which has been emphasised more than once by Lord Willingdon's Government. It has been claimed by the Government that this double policy, on the one hand, aims at advancing constitutional reforms, and on the other, seek to suppress what the Government considers to be subversive and revolutionary movements. In pursuance of the first, it is claimed that the Round Table Conference has been framed as a result of consultation with Indians and that a Joint Parliamentary Committee is considering them. These proposals are known as the White Paper. In pursuance of the second, the Government has thought it necessary to suppress the Civil Disobedience movement with a heavy hand. To Indians it seems that the second policy has not only been much more in evidence and has caused untold suffering to numberless people, but is responsible for the issuing of Ordinances and the enactment of laws which have taken away even the ordinary rights of citizenship and laid down drastic penalties and suppressed not only what may be regarded as subversive movements, but effectively prevented perfectly constitutional agitation also. The reform side of the policy has succeeded only in feeding credulous people on hopes of something which may not come. We have, undoubtedly, had three Round Table Conferences, Committees and Sub-Committees *ad infinitum* and prolonged inquiry by a Joint Parliamentary Committee. It has dragged on in some form or other its interminable investigations for six or seven long years. It is yet to be seen if this long labour is going to produce anything acceptable even to the most moderate opinion in the country.

THE WHITE PAPER—FOUR TESTS

The White Paper has been condemned by almost unanimous public opinion in India as highly disappointing and unsatisfactory. And, of course, it does not in any way fulfil the requirements of the Congress, which has declared for independence meaning and including complete control over the Army, the Finances, the Foreign relations and the internal administration of the country. The White Paper is nothing if it is not a negation of all these items and if it does not bar even a gradual progress towards any of them. In view of the fact that very serious efforts are being made in England to whittle down even the White Paper proposals and that even Mr. Arthur Henderson, the leader of the Labour Party, is unable to concede anything in the nature of even diluted self-determination to India, it may seem out of place for me to devote any time to its detailed criticism. But inasmuch as the White Paper proposals are the result of long and expensive consultations and are undergoing detailed examination by the Joint Parliamentary Committee and have been put forward in justification of the Government policy of advancing constitutional reforms, I take leave to point out that the proposals of the White Paper do not take us anywhere near what our moderate countrymen aim at, *viz.*, Dominion Status, not to speak of complete independence which is the Congress goal. In fact, they take the country in some respects in the opposite direction and leave it in a position constitutionally worse than that now occupied under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms.

I will judge the White Paper proposals in the light of four tests, namely, (1) how far the proposed new legislatures will be representative of the nation; (2) how far the powers alleged to be transferred to popular control are real in the Centre and the Provinces; (3) what the Powers proposed to be transferred in regard to the Finances are, and what additional burdens India will have to bear for the New Constitution; and (4) whether the proposed Constitution contains within itself any elements of growth and development.

COMPOSITION OF FEDERAL LEGISLATURE

It is sought to replace the bloc of officials and non-officials nominated by the Government by nominees of Indian States, joining the Federation. The nominated officials and non-officials of British India cannot be said to be amenable to popular opinion but they have certainly a wider outlook and are more in contact with public opinion than any nominee of a State could be. They also feel a sense of responsibility even though it is to the British Government and not to the people of India. Will the State nominees have any information about or acquaintance with events happening in British India from which the States have been in a way kept segregated? The only effect of the replacement of the nominated bloc by States' nominees will be a tightening of the British control coupled with traditions of a mere autocratic rule and greater disregard of popular wishes than we are accustomed to in British India and which these nominees will bring with themselves. But apart from its bearing the character of a nominated bloc, it will also be a larger bloc numerically. Under the Montagu Reforms, out of 145 members of the Assembly, 40 or 27·5 per cent. are nominated if we exclude the member for Berar who for practical purposes is an elected member; under the White Paper proposals, out of a House of 375, no less than 125 or 33·3 per cent. are nominated by the States—an increase in the nominated element of 6 per cent. When we look at the composition of the elected element in the Federal Assembly, we find that separate electorates have not only been retained but considerably extended and the number of those generally expected to side with the British and the Governor-General considerably increased. I believe, in the place of 41 out of 104 or 39 per cent. being returned by separate electorates under the existing Constitution, we shall have 108 out of 250 or 43 per cent. returned by separate electorate under the White Paper scheme. Thus, there can be hardly any doubt that the White Paper Federal Assembly will be a less progressive and more autocratically inclined body than the present Assembly. It is

unnecessary to go into the Constitution of the Second Chamber which is bound to be less progressive than the popular house. In a joint session which is provided for, the nominated element will be as much as 235 out of 636 or 37 per cent. and a motion of no-confidence in connection with a subject relating to British India against a British Indian Minister can never secure a two-thirds majority if the State nominees chose to maintain the Ministry.

In the provinces the nominated bloc is done away with, but several provinces like Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and the United Provinces are going to be saddled in its place with a Second Chamber, and if the trend of opinion as it is developing in England gives any indication, other provinces are probably going to follow suit under the advice of the Joint Parliamentary Committee. Whatever justification there may be for a Second Chamber in the Federal Legislature, there is none whatever for it in a subordinate legislature like that of the provinces. Besides, there is no justification for the extra expenditure involved in setting up and maintaining these Second Chambers. Nor does the experience of the working of the Montford Reforms lend any support in their favour even in the provinces, which may be said to be radical or very progressive.

POWERS CLAIMED TO BE TRANSFERRED

Now, no Constitution can be said to confer Self-Government or Responsible Government or Dominion Status, much less complete independence, which reserves to the Governor-General and refuses to transfer to Ministers under the control of a popular legislature, the administration of Defence, Foreign Affairs and Ecclesiastical Departments. But leaving this alone, which the White Paper frankly reserves, let us consider the Departments it professes to transfer. In regard to these also, it is clearly laid down that the Governor-General will not be guided by the advice of Ministers, if so to be guided would infringe on what are called the Reserve Departments, his special

responsibilities and I may add also his discretionary powers. These are couched in such general terms that there are hardly any measure which the Governor-General could not hold up or prevent, if he considered it necessary to do so, in his wisdom, which will be the final arbiter in the matter. These special responsibilities are so vague and widespread that they may be said to pervade all departments.

It is not inconceivable that the most innocent action taken by a Minister not in favour with the Governor-General or the Governor and in this respect the powers of both are identical for all practical purposes within their respective spheres could easily be regarded as infringing upon his special responsibility in respect of one or other of the seven heads into which it is divided. The much advertised autonomy of the Provinces really gives more autonomy to the Governor than to the people or the Minister and enables the Governor-General to have his orders executed in spite of the Ministers even when they may happen to deal with a matter falling within the scope of the latter if only the Governor or the Governor-General decides that it infringes on the special responsibility of the one or the other.

Special responsibilities are laid down under seven heads for the Governor-General. They are: (1) the prevention of grave menace to the peace or tranquillity of India or any part thereof; (2) the safeguarding of the financial responsibility and credit of the Federation; (3) the safeguarding of the legitimate interests of minorities; (4) the securing to the members of the Public Services of any right provided for them by the Constitution Act and the safeguarding of their legitimate rights; (5) the prevention of Commercial discrimination; (6) the protection of the rights of Indian States; and (7) any matter which affects the administration of any department under the direction and control of the Governor-General, the Governor-General being empowered in each case to determine whether any special responsibility is involved in any given circumstance. The same powers are given

mutatis mutandis to the Governor in so far as they are applicable to provinces. The first practically takes away with one hand what it purports to give with the other; law and order though said to be transferred in the provinces are thus kept quite safe within the double lock of special responsibility of the Governor-General and the Governor. The elasticity of this phrase is quite well known in this country and I am using no language of exaggeration if I say that it is mere camouflage and a fraud to say that law and order are being transferred when the special responsibility in this respect is reserved in the wide and all-pervasive terms as is done under the White Paper proposal.

As regards the second, admittedly, definition of this responsibility is drawn in wide terms and enables the Governor-General to step in whenever any proposal of the Minister regarding budgeting or borrowing is considered by him as prejudicing or endangering India's credit in the money market of the world. Past experience has shown that financial stability and credit of India are synonymous with British profit at the expense of India, and British interests have been served so often and so brazen-facedly in the name of India's stability and credit that no Indian is likely to be deceived by words which connote more than their ordinary dictionary meaning. The entire currency and exchange policy of the Government is said to be dictated by these considerations and we know it to our cost how a stroke of the pen or an apparently innocent notification of the Government has the effect of transferring crores from the hands of Indians to those of the British without the former realising it.

The third will, of course, come very handy in turning many an awkward corner. Our Muslim brethren and others who are in a minority are apt to run away with the idea that the British Government is reserving special responsibility to safeguard their interest. Really speaking, if there is anything more calculated than another to keep all the communities warring with each other, it is this. Besides, it is a delusion to think that the safeguards are devised to serve any of the Indian minorities. They will

find in actual working that after all, in all matters of moment, it is not they who are meant but the small microscopic minority of those birds of passage who come from thousands of miles and make hay while the sun shines and then disappear in the evening of their days to enjoy the fruits in their native land again.

The fourth destroys whatever is yet left of autonomy. We shall indeed be masters in our own house without having the power to order our servants about, to whom we shall be bound to pay their unbearably high salaries, guarantee their pensions and leaves and promotion and what not. It will be easy enough for these so-called Civil Servants to set at naught not only the policy, decisions and orders of their so-called superiors the Ministers, but to create deadlocks which will be set down to the discredit of Indians who will be branded as incompetent and inexperienced Ministers to whom it was a mistake, it will be said, to transfer powers.

In the name of preventing Commercial discrimination against the British, it is really ensured that the Indian should be discriminated against in the future as he has been in the past. It must be the experience of all businessmen who have anything to do with the Government and they cannot move an inch without coming across the Government in some form or another, how at every step they have to face situations which a Britisher there has not to face. Go to the coal fields. They will tell you how it is difficult for an Indian colliery owner to get a railway siding to his colliery, how it is difficult for him to get wagons, and how the Indian is every day discriminated against in practice. I am not mentioning how it has been possible for a few British concerns to get leases of practically the whole area with the best seams of coal and how Indians have to be content with second and third class collieries and even these they get with difficulty. I am not forgetting that colliery lands are largely owned by Indians. We know how these things are managed, specially when the owner happens to be a ward of court. The manipulation of railway freights offers an easy handle. When

I was looking after the affairs of the All-India Spinners' Association in my province, I calculated some years ago that the cost of transport of cotton from Sewan (in the district of Saran where cotton is largely grown) to Madhubani in the district of Darbhanga where we produce our best and largest quantity of Khadi, both the districts being within the same division of Tirhut under a Commissioner, was the same as that of transporting cotton from Bombay to Japan and bringing back the cloth made of that cotton to Bombay. I do not know if there has been a change in this respect recently. Similarly, I was told that the cost of transporting coal from South Africa to Indian cotton mills was the same as that of transporting it from the coal fields of Bihar to the same mills. I am mentioning these few illustrations and they can be multiplied to show how in the past the whole policy of the Government of India has been regulated with an eye not to the benefit of Indians but of foreigners, and if by any chance any Minister has the temerity to try to be just, he will at once be held up as discriminating against the Britisher, and the Governor-General or the Governor will have no difficulty in invoking his special responsibility for perpetuating the injustice.

As regards the Indian States, we have already had illustrations how activities of their subjects in favour of constitutional reforms can be throttled and the special responsibility of the Governor-General or the Governor in this respect will be used for preventing the virus of democracy from spreading into these States.

So much for special responsibilities. The discriminatory powers of the Governor-General and the Governors are of a most drastic kind. Under the existing Constitution, the Governor has the power of certification and veto, but under the proposal embodied in the White Paper, he can also send message to the legislature not to proceed with a certain measure of legislation as also to proceed in a certain way; not to pass certain laws as also to pass certain others or that a particular measure must be passed by a particular date and in the event of the legislature refusing or failing

to obey his command, it will become a Governor-General's or Governor's Act which will have the force of an Act of legislature without having the odium attached to the name of "ordinance" and without the fetters of a limited duration, which an ordinance has. These proposals place India under a virtual dictatorship. Mr. Churchill described the position admirably in another context:

> The Viceroy or Governor-General was armed with all the powers of a Hitler or a Mussolini. By a stroke of pen, he could scatter the Constitution and decree any law to be passed or martial law, which was no law at all. Of all these he was the sole judge. Such a functionary was a dictator and he had a very powerful army.

All this power is given not only to the Governor-General, but even to Provincial Governors who are, for the first time, to be invested with powers to pass ordinances and Governor's Acts and all other powers within their spheres which the Governor-General possesses in respect of the country as a whole.

The White Paper proposals further take away certain powers which are now possessed by the Assembly in however attenuated a form they may be. Thus, a discussion of the Railway budget used to furnish an opportunity for the ventilation of grievance in connection with railway administration. Railways could now be discussed and voted upon by the Central Legislature, but the creation of the proposed statutory railway authority would have the effect of precluding the future Government and Legislature from making any effective criticism of any matter transferred to the statutory authority. That this is not a negligible matter is apparent from the fact that the Railways have some 800 crores invested in them and are very largely national concerns already and where they are not so, they are soon passing into the hands of the State.

FINANCE

When we come to consider the question of finance, the illusory nature of the so-called reforms becomes still more apparent. It has been calculated that 80 per cent. of the

Central revenue in the Central Government will be eaten up by Army expenditure. Debt service, guaranteed pays, pensions and allowances, which will be outside the vote of the Assembly, and the remaining 20 per cent. with which alone the Minister, supposed to be responsible to the Legislature, could play, would be subject to a vote of the upper chamber which could bring it before a joint session of both Chambers for final determination. Further, if the Governor-General regards the demand for grants by the Minister under any head inadequate for the discharge of his special responsibility, he may include any additional amount which he regards necessary for the discharge of such special responsibility, and the legislature will not be at liberty to vote on the same. Thus it is apparent that the control of the Ministry over the public purse is practically *nil* in the Centre.

Considering the proposals from the point of view of the burden they impose on the country, it has been said on high authority that the introduction of provincial autonomy will involve an annual expenditure of 6½ to 8 crores and that of responsibility in the Centre another 2 crores every year. In a country which is admittedly the poorest in the world, where the cost of administration is top heavy and certainly out of all proportion to the income per capita of the population under it, any addition to the already unbearable burden cannot but be regarded with the greatest misgiving, and no responsible person can easily reconcile himself to this additional burden as a price for reforms so illusory, so retrograde, and so calculated to perpetuate and tighten the strangle-hold on the country.

FUTURE IN THE AIR

There is no provision for any automatic growth or development in the Constitution. Everything does and will continue to depend on the sweet will and pleasure of the British Parliament. There is no pretence at self-determination and even the Federation, which is to come after fulfilment of so many conditions precedent, can come only after a second vote of the Houses of Parliament.

And what is this federation? It is a kind of federation which has no parallel in history. In it the rulers of one-third of India will be called in to counteract through their nominees the progressive elected elements of the remaining two-thirds. There is absolutely no mutuality in any respect, the princes' nominees will have equal rights with the elected representatives of British India to interfere with the administration of British India without British Indian representatives having any the least voice in the administration of the States, which will continue their autocratic rule without so much as even declaring or guaranteeing the elementary, fundamental rights of citizenship, which are or rather ought to be the basis and foundation of any allegiance which the people may be required to bear to the State. In other words, it will be a kind of federation in which unabashed autocracy will sit entrenched in one-third of India and peep in every now and then to strangle popular will in the remaining two-thirds. But the princes themselves will be more helpless than they are now and will soon realise the effect of a federation which is conceived to keep them free from the baneful interference of British India people but nonetheless subservient to the Viceroy.

SUSPENSION OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE— COUNCIL PROGRAMME

I have thus far discussed the dual policy of Government. I come now to our own policies and plans. Events have somehow so happened that since the breach of the Truce in 1932, we have had to steer our course clear of Government policies. The suspension of the Civil Disobedience movement was declared not with reference to any declaration of policy by Government, but with reference to the peculiar moral and spiritual character of our struggle.

I will not go into the events that led up to the historic Patna decision of May 1934—how Gandhiji successfully challenged from jail the Communal Award of the Premier which had threatened to vivisect the Hindu community

in twain, how Gandhiji intensified the movement for the abolition of untouchability and his epic fast as part of it, and his release, the Poona Conference and how as a result of things he had heard and seen during the great Harijan tour he came to recommend to the A. I. C. C. suspension of the Civil Disobedience and confining it to himself. Let the country study the course of events in the statements Gandhiji has issued from time to time.

Some of the factors which must have weighed with Gandhiji when he recommended suspension of Civil Disobedience as a mass movement could not have escaped the notice of even casual observers. Two weaknesses seem to me to have dogged our footsteps.

Firstly, the Congress workers had been gradually and perhaps unconsciously led into adoption of methods of secrecy, which reduced what would have been an open battle of defiance into a battle of wits. It was not realised that *Satyagraha* is essentially a fight on a higher moral plane in which suffering is openly courted and cheerfully borne and which aims at conquering the opponent by an appeal to his moral sense and in which any attempt to over-reach him rebounds with fatal effect on the *Satyagrahi* himself.

Secondly, it must be also admitted that the attack of the Government on a vulnerable point succeeded. People were not prepared to lose property to the extent they were prepared to lose liberty and even life, and when heavy fines and sequestration of property in lieu of fines and confiscations started on a wholesale scale, gradually demoralisation set in and ultimately broke the backbone of the movement. Attempt was made to continue the struggle by confining it to those individuals who had faith in it, and taking it out of the methods of secrecy. That partly explains the Poona and Patna decisions.

It has had to be suspended in the very interests of the movement and those of the country. The principal reason was our own weakness, and yet I do not feel that

there is any reason to be down-hearted. Our object is nothing less than the liberation of a vast country which is as big as a Continent, with its varied population of many castes and creeds and speaking different languages. The response which the country has made from one end to the other to the call of the Congress, has been splendid and we have reason to be proud of it. Because our object is great and the task difficult and tremendous we have to consider our own shortcomings and defects of the Working Committee and the All-India Congress Committee and certain announcements which Mahatma Gandhi has made have been subjected to very searching criticism. The value and importance of these resolutions and the statements of Mahatmaji consist in the fact that they have brought in the forefront of discussion certain fundamental considerations. The first statement which Mahatmaji issued from Patna on the 7th April last, simultaneously with his correspondence with Dr. Ansari, announced his advice to the Congress and Congressmen to suspend Civil Disobedience except with regard to himself and to those who believed in entry into legislatures, to take up the programme of Council Entry. Both these items were considered at great length at a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee at Patna in the following May and were endorsed by it. The Council Entry programme naturally led to the creation of the Congress Parliamentary Board which has been entrusted with the work of organising, guiding and controlling propaganda in favour of election of Congressmen to the Assembly for the time being. Now, to-day we are in the midst of a campaign which has led to the formulation of the Congress policy in the legislatures in regard to the White Paper and the Government policy of ruthless repression on which all parties in it are agreed but also, unfortunately, on what has been called the Communal decision of the British Government on which all are not agreed. It will be recalled that after the Second Round Table Conference, the British Government announced its decision setting from its point of view the questions of communal representations in the legislatures under the

reform constitution. The decision was given because the Indian members of the Round Table Conference were unable to arrive at an agreed settlement of the outstanding differences on the constitutional question amongst the various communities in India. It has created the unfortunate position that whilst we are unable to agree among ourselves, it is also impossible to accept this decision which is anti-national in many respects and is calculated to retard the progress of the country towards a common national outlook. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that some of the minorities particularly the Mussalmans are opposed to rejecting it or think in the main it safeguards their interests. The Working Committee had, therefore, to decide the question on which a large section of Hindus and Sikhs are on the one side and practically all Mussalmans, with a few leading exceptions, and perhaps members of some other minority communities are on the other, the former favouring the unqualified rejection of the decision and the latter equally strongly favouring its acceptance, until it was replaced by an agreed settlement. Under the circumstances, the Working Committee had no other alternative but to point out the unsatisfactory and anti-national nature of the decision hoping at the same time to be able in course of time to replace it by an agreed settlement, and to that end not to divert the attention of the country by creating an agitation in favour of either accepting or rejecting it.

MAHATMAJI'S STATEMENT

But events have marched quickly during the past few weeks, Mahatma Gandhi has just made two statements of far-reaching importance, in which he has recorded his reading of the history of the past fifteen years, placed his finger unerringly on the secret places of our heart and given us a warning for the future. Not even his worst critics have challenged his analysis and some have even gloated over the situation in an 'I told you so' spirit. It will be best for us and for our country if even at the end of these fifteen years of our struggle we realise the true situation. The first statement was in the nature of a challenge and a

feeler, the second is the result of the country's reaction to the first. In the first he declared the things that he holds dearer than life itself—truth and non-violence and khadi, reform and revolution through conversion and not compulsion—and said as one section of the country was running away from these articles of faith and as the other was giving no effect to the allegiance to them which it professed from year to year there was nothing for it but for him to retire from the Congress. In the second statement he declares his conviction that his retirement is inescapable but as he retires in order to be of more service to the Congress and the country than heretofore, he has also suggested a reform in the Constitution which alone can save the Congress from disruption.

Now that leaders like Sardar Vallabhai Patel, Dr. Ansari and the Khan Brothers have given their hearty assent to the correctness of Gandhiji's decision, I do not think it necessary for me to take up your time discussing the *pros* and *cons* of the question of his retirement. I should certainly have done so if my own mind ran counter to the opinions of these colleagues, but I am in hearty agreement with them, though the mind and heart both boggle at the thought of his retirement. But I am steadied as soon as I remind myself that his decision proceeds out of the depth of his devotion to truth and non-violence and it must spur us on to further effort towards those ideals.

But though Mahatmaji has made up his mind not to seek the vote of the Congress on things that make up the warp and woof of his life, I would ask you not to dismiss those things without a thought, and would urge you to realise their implications and to give them some place at least in your programme and your policies. Though I do not claim to have the same living and active faith as Mahatma Gandhi in those things that he has taught some of us at least to hold dear, I must declare my creed and my conviction about them.

CONGRESS CREED

About the amendment in the creed, I would ask you only one question. Have we really understood by "peaceful

and legitimate" anything but "truthful and non-violent" all these years? Has the world outside understood our creed differently? All the credit that we can take to-day and all the discredit that critics and our self-introspecting hearts pour upon us spring from the fact that we have kept that lofty creed as our ideal. The world should cease to watch our fight with interest if our creed meant anything less than it has meant all these years. Whatever the failure of our civil resistance to civilise our rulers, there is no gainsaying the fact that there should have been much more unashamed brutality than we have been the victims of, if there had not been this great creed proclaimed by us.

I next come to the yarn franchise and to the much discussed Khadi clause. I may say without being guilty of national vanity that there is no other Flag in the world which expresses in itself purer and loftier ideals. It rules out in one sweep the fourfold curse of modern humanity, *viz.*, imperialism, militarism, capitalism and industrialism. The Spinning Wheel and Khadi are not only the living link between the classes and the masses, they are symbols of the country's determination to resist all forms of exploitation by non-violent means. They represent an era of purification of politics and private life. Remove the Khadi clause and you will snap the living link between the cities and the villages.

To my mind Truth, Non-Violence, and Khadi represent a triple force whereby we can achieve the whole of the Karachi programme and more. There is a section of our countrymen who without having achieved even what we pledged ourselves to do at Karachi insist on crying for more. Whilst I would have no objection to amplifying the Karachi programme and elucidating it wherever there may be any fear of a misunderstanding, I would say emphatically that we should do nothing that compromises by one iota the creed of non-violence. Whatever may be our failures, we have made rapid strides. Let us not by our impatience undo the work of the last fifteen years. My friends the Socialists, are keen on a

more inspiring ideology and would hasten the elimination of all that stands for exploitation. I should like to tell them in all humility but with all the force at my command that there is no greater ideology than is expressed by the creed of truth and non-violence and the determination of the country not to eliminate the men that stand for exploitation but the forces that do so. Our quarrel is with the sin and not the sinner which we all are to a greater or less degree. Compulsion will react on us with redoubled force; conversion, however slow it may seem, will be the shortest cut and will mean a new contribution to history and civilisation.

REFORM OF CONSTITUTION

Having said this, I would say a word about the reform in the constitution that Mahatmaji has suggested in his second statement. He recommends that the size of the Congress should be considerably curtailed and the representation in the Congress should reflect its hold on the country as a whole. It has been suggested that to make the Congress an efficient deliberative body, the number of delegates should be reduced from 6,000 to 1,000 and each delegate should be regarded not as a representative of a set number of people living within a particular area but should be regarded as in fact he is a representative of the members on the Congress roll and give to those places and provinces proportionally larger representation in the Congress, that will have more members on their rolls and that have been more active in carrying out the Congress programme. Whether they, the members, represent the whole nation or not will depend upon the quantity and quality of service they render. The Congress influence and hold over the people have never depended upon the number on the actual register but they depend upon what it stands for and the sacrifice that the members have made for achieving the goal.

In conclusion, I would say that in considering Mahatmaji's statements you should remove from your minds any apprehension that you may have that he is going to retire from public life or that by not being

physically connected with the Congress, his interest will cease or that his help will not be available. I have no such apprehension. I am sure his separation is intended to strengthen and help us and not in any way to weaken or hinder us. I feel that Mahatma Gandhi outside the Congress which does not wholeheartedly accept his programme will be more helpful to the country and the Congress than Mahatma Gandhi inside the Congress with the drag of a big unbelieving majority at his back. I do not, therefore, feel any shock over his impending separation. I do not minimise the effect of such a decision, if he comes to it, but I wish you to have faith in him and I have no doubt that all will be right, whether he decides to work from within or from outside the Congress.

CONCLUSION

Let us start with a clean slate on the work in front of us. The need of the hour is not for a bigger or more inspiring programme, but for the determination to achieve what little we may set before ourselves. The task is immense. There is to-day a greater determination on the part of the rulers not to part with power, as they have succeeded in creating disruption in our ranks. The Ordinance rule of the past four years indicates the extent to which Government can go to suppress the movement for freedom, even though it may be probably non-violent. Bengal and N.-W. Frontier have been raped seemingly beyond repair. It is difficult to breathe free in the one and it is impossible to understand the situation in the other. There have been deplorable acts of terrorism in Bengal, but unmanning the whole youth of vast areas is not the way to fight it. The N.-W. Frontier Province which has had a severe spell of repression, which the brave Pathans led by that selfless and patriotic servant Abdul Gaffar Khan have borne with exemplary restraint is forbidden ground for him and for his brother. There is constructive work enough and to spare, to occupy the time and energies of those who care for it. The resolution on cent per cent. Swadeshi that Mahatmaji has embodied in

his second statement is a vital one. If the infatuation with high-sounding slogans has not blinded our reasons, we should see that Khadi with cent per cent. Swadeshi is enough to take us to our goal of complete independence which in Mahatmaji's language " is an impossible dream without the higher classes merging themselves in those millions who are miscalled lower classes".

COUNCIL-ENTRY PROGRAMME

There is lastly the Councils programme. The All-India Congress Committee has decided to contest elections to the Legislative Assembly, so that the country might pronounce its verdict on the White Paper and the repressive policy of the Government. I hope that the electors will show by unmistakable action that the Congress possesses their full confidence. Let us not, however, be led away by the idea that Swaraj can be achieved by anything we could do in the legislatures. We have to remember that the price for freedom must be paid before we can get it and while we have every reason to be proud of what has been done and what the country has suffered, it is, after all, yet inadequate for the great object we have in view. The task we have taken upon ourselves is great and glorious. It requires inexhaustible patience, unflinching determination and unending sacrifice. Time and world forces are helping us and, above all, God is with us in this great epic struggle of an unarmed people fighting with the weapons of *Satyagraha* of Truth and Non-Violence a most powerful Government armed cap-a-pie and equipped with the latest engines of destruction devised by science and human ingenuity. For us there is no turning back. The goal is clear. It is nothing short of Independence.

MEANING OF INDEPENDENCE

Independence is the natural outcome of all that the freedom movement in India has stood for. It cannot mean isolation particularly when we remember that it has to be achieved by non-violence. It means the end of exploitation of one country by another and of one part of the population of the same country by another part. It contemplates a free and friendly association with other nations for the

mutual benefit of all. It forbodes evil to none, not even to those exploiting us except in so far as they rely upon exploitation rather than goodwill. The sanction behind this Independence movement is non-violence which in its positive and dynamic aspect is goodwill of and for all. We already see signs of how it has begun appealing to a certain extent to world opinion. This appeal has to become irresistible. It can do so according as the element of distrust and suspicion, which has its birth in fear, is eliminated and replaced by a sense of security born of confidence in the goodwill of India. India, having no designs on others, will not then need a large army either for its protection against foreigners or for internal peace which will stand guaranteed by the goodwill of her inhabitants. Having no designs on others, she will be able to claim immunity from the evil designs of others, and her safety will be buttressed and protected by the goodwill of the world at large. Conceived in this light, our Independence ought not to frighten even the British unless they aim at perpetuating the present unnatural conditions.

The method too is crystal clear. It is active, dynamic, non-violent, mass action. We may fail once; we may fail twice; but we are bound to succeed some day. Many have already lost their lives and all. Many more have sacrificed themselves in their struggle for freedom. Let us not be deterred by the difficulties which confront us nor diverted from our straight course by fear or favour. Our weapons are unique and the world is watching the progress of great experiment with interest and high expectation. Let us be true to our creed and firm in our determination. *Satyagraha* in its active application may meet with temporary set-backs but it knows no defeat. It is itself a great victory, for as James Lowell put it :

> Truth for ever on the scaffold
> Wrong for ever on the throne
> Yet that scaffold sways the future
> And behind the dim unknown
> Standeth God within the shadow
> Keeping watch above His own.

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Words in italics indicate names of periodicals.
Words within quotation indicate names of books.

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